
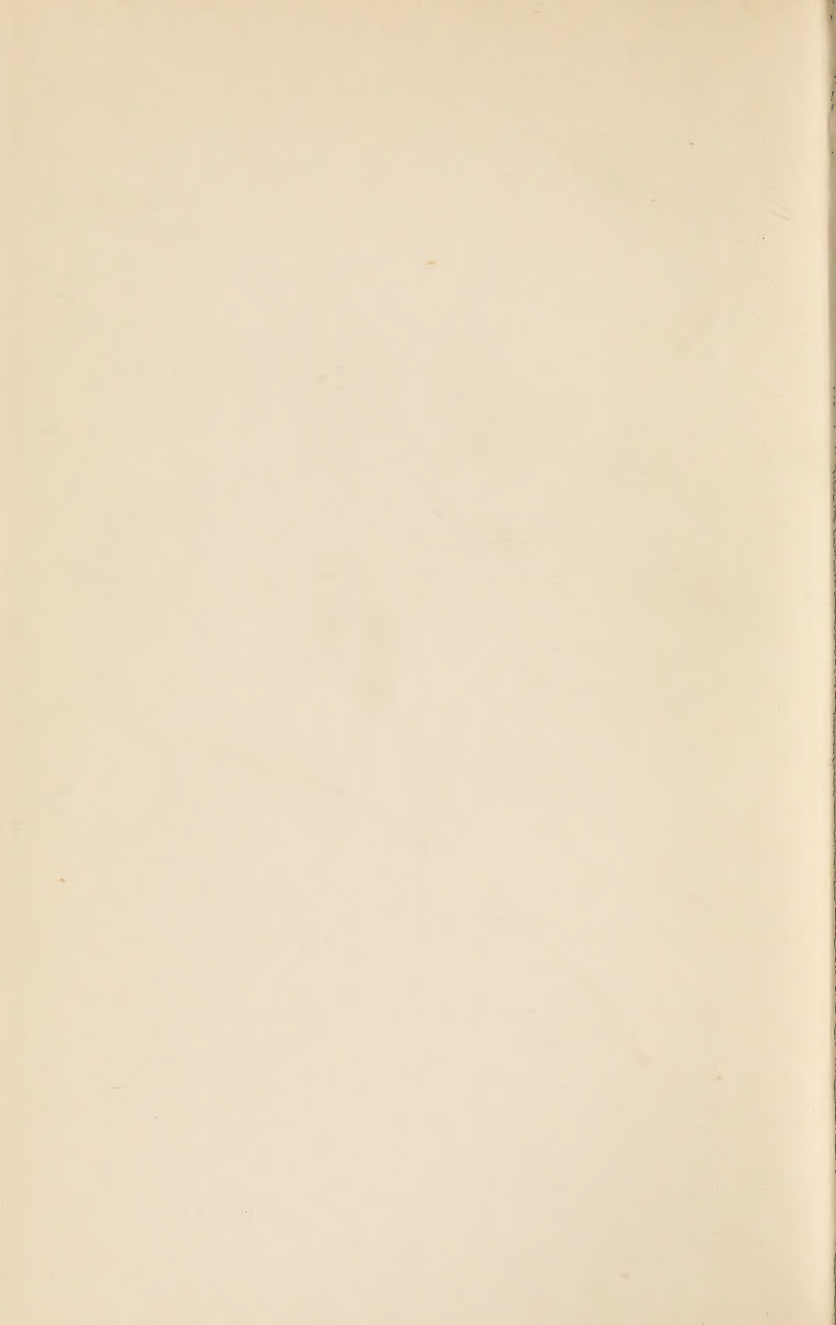




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APOSTOLIC ORDER AND UNITY

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APOSTOLIC ORDER AND UNITY

BY

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PREFACE.



A RESIDENCE of thirty-five years (1858–1893) as a missionary of the Church Missionary Society, in the Punjab and Persia, has naturally taught me to regard the differences of ecclesiastical organisation between various Christian Churches as of trifling importance, compared with the gulf which separates Christendom from Heathendom.

In both those lands I found missionaries of non-Episcopal Churches, in Great Britain and America, doing just as great and good a work for Christ as we were doing; and, so far from being able to look down on them as in any way inferior to myself, I esteemed it a privilege to sit at the feet of a Duff in Calcutta, a Wilson in Bombay, a Newton in the Punjab, and many others, and seek to learn of them the best means to win souls for Christ.

In those days there was no let or hindrance to missionaries of all Protestant and Evangelical Churches exercising the rites of hospitality towards one another, and living on terms of perfect inter-

communion and brotherly fellowship; and thus manifesting to the heathen that unity of the Spirit which our Lord prayed might exist between all His disciples. The differences of organisation that existed among us were therefore no stumbling-block to the unbelievers, but rather the contrary.

During those thirty-five years a great change had taken place in our beloved Church in the Home Land; doctrines were taught and ceremonies practised which had been almost unknown in the Reformed Church of England since the Reformation; and that Church had become divided into two almost hostile camps. Both camps, indeed, yearned for unity with other Churches; but one of them openly professed to seek that unity (or rather uniformity) with the foreign Churches of Greece and Rome, while the other sought for unity of the Spirit with their own fellow-countrymen and fellow-Christians at home. The one party gave the pre-eminence to what they called apostolic organisation, the other to apostolic doctrine and practice. One could not but perceive that by this division in our own ranks, and by the efforts of many of our clergy to undo the work of the Reformation, the breach between us and all other Reformed Churches, in England, Scotland, on the Continents, and in America, was sadly widened, and that all prospects of winning back our Nonconformist brethren to their mother Church were rendered hopeless. The question, which of the two camps has truth on its side, could not be shirked.

Having failed to discover in Holy Scripture any foundation for the novel doctrines which had caused the division in our own Church, I determined to study the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, and see what they had to say on the subject. I formed this resolution solely with a desire to enlighten my own ignorance, and without any intention of publishing the result of my study. The pleasure and profit I have derived from it, added to the fact that I know of no Church history which does full justice to this, the most important of all periods of the history of the Church, namely, from A.D. 70 to A.D. 130, convinced me that it was my duty to make known to others, who may not have had leisure for the study of these Fathers, what I had so much enjoyed for myself, and what had so greatly strengthened my belief in the fundamental truths of our holy faith as handed down to us, first by the apostles, and then by our Reformers.

I have spared no trouble to make the little book quite exhaustive of all passages contained in the Christian writings of the first hundred and thirty years of our era, inspired and uninspired, which throw any light on apostolic order as a basis for unity between various Christian Churches. I have tried to let facts speak for themselves, and to add nothing of my own but what seemed to me to be the plain deductions which any unprejudiced student would draw from them.

I trust that the many imperfections which readers will find in my work will only induce them to study

the word of God and the writings of the Apostolic Fathers for themselves, and I humbly and earnestly pray that the Spirit of truth may forgive the imperfections of it, and vouchsafe to use it for His own glory, and to hasten the day when "all Christians shall be one, even as the Father and the Son are one, that the world may believe" that Christ is their Saviour.

ROBERT BRUCE.

ST. NICHOLAS' VICARAGE, DURHAM,
December 25, 1902.

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ERRATA.

Page 35, line 10.—*Read* “second and third,” *for* “first and second.”

Page 46, line 4.—*Insert after* “St. John,” “Cyril’s MS. being little known in Europe till 1875.”

Page 117, line 17.—*Footnote*, “See Appendix D.”

PRAYER.

O GOD, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of peace : Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great danger we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord ; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, and one Hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may henceforth be all of one heart, and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty and everliving God, who by Thy holy apostle hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks for all men : We most humbly beseech Thee to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord ; and grant that all they that do confess Thy holy name may agree in the truth of Thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

“Quoniam totus Christus caput est et corpus . . . caput est ipse Salvator noster, passus sub Pontio Pilato, qui nunc postea quam resurrexit a mortuis, sedit ad dexteram Patris, corpus autem eius est Ecclesia ; non ista aut illa, sed toto orbe diffusa ; nec ea quæ nunc est in hominibus qui presentem vitam agunt, sed ad eam pertinentibus etiam, his qui fuerunt ante nos et his qui futuri sunt post nos usque in finem seculi. Tota etiam Ecclesia constans ex omnibus fidelibus, quia fideles omnes membra sunt Christi, habet illud caput positum in cœlis quod gubernat corpus suum ; etsi separatum est visione, sed annectitur caritate.”

ST. AUGUSTINE.

APOSTOLIC ORDER AND UNITY.



INTRODUCTION.

“THE glory Thou hast given Me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one : I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one ; that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and lovedst them, even as Thou lovedst Me” (John xvii. 22, 23, R.V.).

The duty of seeking to “attain to the unity of the faith” with all whom the Father loveth even as He loveth the Son, is an essential part of the duty of obeying the great command to “make disciples of all nations.” It is one of the blessed signs of the times that, along with the revival of an interest in missions, there has been a revival in almost all Christian Churches of the acknowledgment of the duty of prayer and effort that “all who call upon Thy holy name may agree in the truth of Thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love.” But, in addition to the duty of prayer and effort, *knowledge* is needed also, that in view of the many

churches and denominations, some of which may, perchance, be heretical, we may know who they are whom the Father loveth; who those are for whom our Lord specially prayed. There are two things which separate various Christian bodies from one another, namely, (1) different views regarding apostolic doctrine and apostolic ecclesiastical organisation; and (2) the difference between those who believe that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation," and those who hold that the tradition and decrees of the Church are equally binding with the commands of the written word of God. With this latter wall of separation the following pages will not deal.

Again there are two classes of seekers after unity with members of denominations other than their own: (1) those who regard *ecclesiastical organisation* as of primary importance; and (2) those who think apostolic *doctrine* of far greater importance than outward organisation. *As a rule, it is only the former of these two classes who find any difficulty in living in unity, concord, and godly love with all those "who confess Thy Holy Name."* For differences of *ecclesiastical organisation* divide the Church far more than differences of *doctrine*. It is worthy of note that all Churches lay claim to be followers of apostolic orders of ministry, and of the apostolic teaching as to sacraments, rites,

and ceremonies. One would suppose that all searchers after truth must agree that the question, "What is apostolic in the ecclesiastical organisation of the Church?" must be decided, if not entirely by Scripture, certainly by Scripture and the writings of the Fathers of the Church in the first century after the ascension of the Lord, and that later developments in Church organisation, whether beneficial or not to the *bene esse* of the Church, cannot lay claim to be considered apostolic; and that different Churches ought to agree to differ about them, and not to allow them to be a hindrance to godly union and concord between their members. This all-important century (from A.D. 30 to A.D. 130) is the century of the writings of the apostles and evangelists, and of the "apostolic Fathers." One of the apostles, St. John the Divine, lived through two-thirds of it, and the Canon of Holy Scriptures was closed by him not long before A.D. 100. There are only three names of note among "the apostolic Fathers," and they are the names of three great saints and martyrs whose writings not only cast almost all the light we can desire on the history of the ecclesiastical organisation of the Church, but are also profitable for instruction in righteousness; those names are Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, and Polycarp of Smyrna. Besides these there are four other writings generally included in "the apostolic Fathers," namely, "the Didaché," "the Epistle of Barnabas," "the Shepherd of Hermas," and "Fragments of Papias." Of these the Didaché, though very inferior to the

writings of the three great apostolic Fathers, is well worthy of study, as it throws considerable light, as a historic document, on the organisation of the Churches with which the unknown author was conversant; the other three throw no additional light upon the subject, and may be passed over.

These four documents, the Epistles of Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, and the Didaché, can be read in a single day, and all that is knowable in regard to ecclesiastical organisation can be learned from them in a very short space of time; but it is necessary for the earnest student first of all to lay the foundation of a thorough knowledge of all that is contained on the subject in the Scriptures of truth, remembering that even in the time of the apostles "the mystery of iniquity did already work," and "many false prophets had gone out into the world"; remembering also the apostolic injunction, "Try the spirits whether they be of God!"

The New Testament itself covers a century, and naturally divides itself into three nearly equal periods, three generations of human life, of about thirty-three years each. One biography, that of the God-Man, Jesus Christ, gives us the history of the first, that of St. Paul is of paramount importance in the second, and that of St. John in the third generation. The third of these periods differs from the former two; for whereas we have more perfect biographies of our Lord and St. Paul than of any other great men of olden times, what has

come down to us about St. John can hardly be called a biography. With the martyrdoms of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. James the Lord's brother, and the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), the history of the Church is broken off for a season; it was said to have passed through a tunnel, and not to have come to light again till Ignatius and Polycarp wrote their letters, between A.D. 110 and A.D. 120. The lives of the other apostles were lost in oblivion, and the writings of St. John alone remained. This is no longer the case, as two other writings, "the Epistle of the Church at Rome to the Church at Corinth" by Clement, and "the Teaching of the Lord through the Twelve Apostles to the Nations," known as "the Didaché," both written before the close of the century, but only lately made known in Western Christendom, now cast valuable light upon it.

If to the three generations contained in the New Testament history we add one generation more, we shall embrace all the writings of the apostles, apostolic men, and apostolic Fathers. A careful and prayerful study of these four generations should teach every honest student of Church history all that is knowable of what is truly apostolic in the ecclesiastical organisation of the Church, and be a help towards casting down the walls of separation between various Christian Churches, or, at least, of discerning between the limits of the city of God defined by the Spirit of God and the walls of separation built by man.

I.

THE FIRST GENERATION.

OUR Lord uses the term *Ecclesia* only twice, and on each occasion with a different extension of the word. In Matt. xvi. 18, "I will build My Church," He means the Church catholic or universal; and in Matt. xviii. 17, "Tell it unto the Church," He designates by the term the local body of believers residing in one locality. Ignatius is the first Christian writer who uses the term "*Catholic Church*," and he defines it as "wheresoever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church." Our Lord, speaking of the *local* Church says, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20). In all our efforts to ascertain what is truly apostolic in the organisation of the Christian Church, it will be necessary to bear in mind these two meanings of the term *Ecclesia*; for the question relates not only to orders of ministry, rites, and ceremonies in the *universal* Church, but also to the same in each *local* Church or congregation.

Our Lord and Master (and it is with His teaching alone that we have to do in the first generation)

makes it very plain that He intended all His disciples to be joined together in one Church, one living organisation; organised, in the highest sense of the term, as a living body, indwelt and quickened by one Spirit; a body of which He was to be the ever-present Head, and every believer a living member, united to Him and to one another by one Spirit, the Lord, and the Giver of life. This essential principle so permeates all His teaching that we need not quote any texts to prove it.

While He taught that the Old and the New Testament *Ecclesiæ* were essentially one, and that He came not to destroy the Old, but to fulfil it in the New, He emphasised many points of difference between them. No race or family was to have pre-eminence in the New; for all nations were to be made His disciples (Matt. xxviii. 19); entrance into it was to be not by natural, but by spiritual birth, and the only condition of entrance was to be faith in Him (John i. 12, iii. 36); as He, being received into the heart by faith, was to be the *life* of the believer, so, being fed upon by faith, He was to be to them "the *bread* of life that came down from heaven" (*ibid.* vi. 35). There was to be no holy city for the true Israel (*ibid.* iv. 21); no house of God except "the temple of His body" (*ibid.* ii. 19-21); no priestly class were to have any pre-eminence in it (Matt. xxiii. 8), for He was their head, and they were all members of His body (John xv. 1-13); and all believers were to

receive the Holy Spirit equally only on the condition of believing on Him (*ibid.* vii. 37-39). Many other points of difference between the Old and the New, and of the fulfilment of the former in the latter, will be recalled to mind; let these suffice.

He appointed no order of ministers except the twelve apostles, with St. Peter as their president. Whether their ministry was to be permanent or temporary, and whether they were to have successors in their office or not, the history of the next century will decide. Of rites and ceremonies He only instituted two—(1) Holy Baptism, to be “the outward and visible sign” of the gift of life, which it was the great object of His mission to bestow on all who received Him into their hearts by faith (1 John v. 12); and the Holy Communion, or the Supper of the Lord, the outward and visible sign of the *food* which He was to be to all who should “feed upon Him in their hearts by faith.”

Perhaps there is nothing so noteworthy in our Lord’s allusions to the future ministers of His Church as His frequent and most solemn warnings against ecclesiastical assumptions and priestly pride. The apostles disputed among themselves who should be the greatest. “Jesus took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when He had taken him up in His arms, He said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in My name, receiveth Me” (Mark ix. 36, 37); and, “Who-soever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little

child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii. 4); and to His disciples He said, "Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Teacher, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." And "call no man your father upon earth: for One is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for One is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. xxiii. 8-11). And "Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Master and Lord, have washed your feet; ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John xiii. 13-15).

The disobedience of the priests (so called) of Christ's Church to these solemn commands and warnings of the Master was one of the very earliest sources from which have sprung the most anti-Christian doctrines which have rent the body of Christ, driven true believers into separation, and led to acts of persecution, cruelty, and tyranny greater than any that have stained the annals of the kingdoms of this world.

We have an instance of it in the days of St. John in the case of Diotrephes, of whom Canon (now Bishop) Gore writes: "We shall be inclined to see in Diotrephes, with his ambitious self-exaltation and his power 'to cast out of the Church' brethren who had come to him from St. John, one of these local bishops who was misusing his authority."

The only rites or ceremonies of the Jewish Church which were, in an altered form, perpetuated by Christ in His Church, were the two which were older than the Aaronic priesthood, and in the administration of which no priest, as such, took any part. (1) Baptism, the seal of the New Covenant, both by its nature as a rite and by the conditions of the recipient, symbolises its superiority over circumcision, the seal of the Old Covenant, in this, that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28). All Churches agree that in the administration of it neither priest nor ordained minister is *essential* to its efficacy. (2) The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the only feast of the Christian Church that was instituted by our Lord; and the Passover is the only festival of the Old Dispensation which was instituted before the institution of the Aaronic priesthood. No priest as such, according to God's order, took any part in its administration. It was essentially a family festival, and the father of the family was the administrator. The paschal lamb was not a sacrifice for sin, like the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement, but a memorial of finished redemption and deliverance from bondage. The Holy Communion is the perpetuation of it, and it was as a family feast in connection with the *Agapé* that it was observed by the apostles and their disciples. "And breaking bread *at home*, they did eat their meat with

gladness and singleness of heart" (Acts ii. 46, R.V.).

"Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us once for all (ἐτύθη), therefore let us keep continual festival" (ἐορτάζωμεν, 1 Cor. v. 7).

II.

THE SECOND GENERATION.

THIS period is longer than either of the other two into which the history of the first century is divided. It extends from the date of the Crucifixion (A.D. 29) to the date of St. Paul's last Epistle, the Second to Timothy (A.D. 67 or 68), over a period of nearly thirty-eight years. Whether we consider the quality or the quantity of the portions of Holy Scripture which were written during these years, we may say that never did "holy men of God, moved by the Holy Ghost," write as they did then. It was during this period that the whole of the New Testament, with the exception of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the writings of St. John, was inspired. The three Synoptic Gospels, though written, as we think, in this period, belong, as to their substance, to the first generation, and have been briefly considered under it; all the other portions of Scripture relate to the foundation, growth, and organisation of the Church during the second generation, and belong to it.

THE APOSTLES.

The twelve apostles of the circumcision were, as we have seen, chosen, called, and commissioned by our Lord Himself in His lifetime; He not only called them by name, but He gave them one of His own titles; for He is "the *Apostle* and the High Priest of our profession." They were in no sense a sacerdotal class; they were not representatives of the tribe of Levi or of the family of Aaron, but of the twelve tribes of Israel; and as such they were emblems of the solidarity of the Old and New Testament Churches; and this character they will bear in the New Jerusalem, where they "shall sit upon twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel." "And the city hath twelve gates—and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. . . . And the wall of the city hath twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev. xxi. 12, 14). Their special calling was to be witnesses to Israel of the resurrection of the Christ; and "to stand at the head of the renewed Israel, in the same manner as the twelve sons of Jacob did at the head of the old Israel."¹

While the disciples waited for the descent of the Holy Spirit, the incompleteness of their number, caused by the fall of Judas, was a defect; it may be that, in the wisdom of God, the Comforter could not come till their number was filled up. St. Peter speaks

¹ Baumgarten, *Apost. Christ.* i. 34.

twice of a necessity : it *was* necessary, according to the Scriptures, that Judas should fall ; and “it is necessary,” according to the same Scripture, “that another take his office” (Acts ii. 16, 20). In answer to the prayer of the whole assembly the Lord showed which of the two He had chosen, “and Matthias was numbered with the eleven apostles.” The Twelve were rather foundation stones of the Church than rulers over it, though for a season they were that also. “It was built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner-stone.”

They had no monopoly of the grace and gifts of the Spirit ; even the higher gifts of speaking with tongues and prophecy were bestowed on all the members of the body (Acts ii. 4, iv. 31). Yet St. Luke places them, in the measure and use of the gifts, on a far higher platform than the other disciples ; and St. Peter, whom the Lord appointed as their president, is raised above them, not only in the history of the Church in Jerusalem, but also as being the one whom “God made choice of among them to open the door of faith unto the Gentiles” (Acts x. and xv. 7).

STRANGE FACTS CONCERNING THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

The Holy Scriptures throw hardly any light whatever upon the characters and lives of any of the Twelve, with the exception of St. Peter and St.

John; and Church history for a hundred years after the fall of Jerusalem tells nothing about their several spheres of labour beyond the confines of the Holy Land. They were apostles of the circumcision (Gal. ii. 9), and the apostolate of St. Paul and St. Barnabas to the Gentiles was a separate office, instituted, as theirs had been, by the Lord Himself (Acts ix. 15, xiii. 2). In keeping with this is the fact that we have no authentic account of any one of them having founded a Gentile Church, or, with the exception of St. Peter in the house of Cornelius, having preached a sermon to a Gentile audience. The last mention of them as a college in the Scripture, is the statement, that when the lay Christians were scattered abroad from Jerusalem, after the martyrdom of Stephen, *they* went into the regions of Judæa and Samaria, preaching the word, and the *apostles* remained in Jerusalem. On two subsequent occasions we read, "the apostles and brethren that were in Judæa," and "the apostles and elders" (Acts xi., xv., and xvi. 4); but on the second of these occasions only two of the Twelve were present in Jerusalem, and they acted rather as members of the congregation than as rulers over it (Gal. ii. 9). It was not an apostle, but "a disciple," who baptized Saul of Tarsus, and who laid hands on him that he might "receive his sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts ix. 10, 17). It was a prophet, Barnabas, not an apostle, who was sent to build up the first Gentile Church in Antioch when it had been founded by lay Christians.

THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

This belongs rather to the spiritual organisation of the living body of Christ than to its outward organisation, as a human society, by orders of ministers ordained by man. The Lord Jesus, the chosen servant of Jehovah, was anointed with the Holy Spirit at Jordan; in the power of the Spirit He entered on His ministry; He spake the words of God, and did the works of God, because the Father "gave Him the Spirit without measure" (John iii. 34). The twelve apostles were of the same order, chosen and sent by Christ, and endued with power from above. The members of the infant Church were filled with the same Spirit, and spake with tongues and prophesied (Acts ii. 4, iv. 31). But though the laymen who laid the foundation of the Church in Antioch, and, indeed, all the members of the first Churches in Jerusalem, Samaria, and Antioch, received the gift of prophecy, and although St. Paul exhorts all Christians to seek it (1 Cor. xiv. 1); yet there were, from the first, individuals who received it in greater measure and retained it more than others, so that they were designated by various titles, corresponding to the special order of the higher ministry of the Spirit for which each of them received special gifts. Accordingly, we read of "certain prophets who came from Jerusalem to Antioch," of whom Agabus was one; of "certain prophets and teachers—in the Church at Antioch," among whom were Barnabas and Saul (Acts xiii. 1);

of "Judas and Silas being prophets" (*ibid.* xv. 32); and St. Paul tells us that the ascended Christ "gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building of the body of Christ" (Eph. iv. 11-13); and "God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers" (1 Cor. xii. 28). We shall find from the study of the apostolic Fathers that these three orders, namely, apostles, prophets, and teachers, continued, till the end of the century at least, to be recognised in the Church as clearly defined orders of ministry, quite separate from the local ministry.

THE TEMPLE AND THE SYNAGOGUE.

The temple was the centre of unity in the Old Testament *Ecclesia*; the synagogue gave room for the diversities which existed between the various schools of thought. "The sects in the Jewish commonwealth," says Bishop Lightfoot, "were not, properly speaking, nonconformists. They only superadded their own special organisation to the established religion of their country, which for the most part they were careful to observe. The institution of the synagogue was flexible enough to allow scope for wide divergences of creed and practice. Different races, as the Cyrenians and Alexandrians, different classes of society as the freedmen, perhaps also different

sects as the Sadducees or the Essenes, each had or could have their own special synagogue, where they might indulge their peculiarities without hindrance.”¹

The whole institution of the temple, with its high priest, priests, and Levites, its altar and sacrifices, was of Divine appointment; the orders of ministers in the synagogue were of human institution. In the worship of the synagogue there was no place for priest, altar, or sacrifice; and it was on the pattern of the organisation of it, not on that of the temple, that the Christian *Ecclesia* was organised.

“The Christian congregations in Palestine long continued to be designated by the name synagogue (Jas. ii. 2). With the synagogue itself they would naturally, if not necessarily, adopt the normal government of a synagogue, and a body of elders or presbyters would be chosen to direct the religious worship, and partly also to watch over the temporal well-being of the society. Hence the silence of St. Luke. When he first mentions the presbyters, he introduces them without preface, as though the institution were a matter of course.”²

Offices in the Jewish Synagogue.—(1) There was a college of elders or presbyters (זְקֵנִים, Luke vii. 3). They were also called פְּרִינָסִים, *shepherds* or *pastors* of the flock (Eph. iv. 11); προεστῶτες, *rulers* (1 Tim. v. 17); and ἡγουμένοι or *leaders* (Heb. xiii. 7).

¹ Lightfoot, *The Christian Ministry*, p. 149.

² *Ibid.* p. 150.

(2) In every large synagogue there was a president of the college of presbyters known as the שָׁלִיחַ or *legatus*. This office arose naturally out of the former, as in every college of officers there must be a chairman or president.

(3) There was a lower office, not so clearly defined, designated as the בִּטְלָנִים or *otiosi*, and the נְבָאֵי-צְדָקָה or alms collectors, answering to the deacons in the Christian Churches. These last were required to be "men of good repute, of probity and wisdom," the very qualities insisted on for *the seven* in Acts vi.

It will be seen at once how closely the organisation of the synagogue was reproduced in the Christian *Ecclesia*,¹ whereas there is no shadow of an attempt to reproduce the organisation of the temple in it till after the end of the second century. The orders of ministers in the synagogue were in no sense necessary to the *esse* of the Old Testament *Ecclesia*; but those of the temple, the priests, the altar, and the sacrifice were of the very essence of it, and they were all fulfilled and done away in Christ.

Until A.D. 70 the temple was the centre and bond of union, not to the Jewish *Ecclesia* only, but to all Christian Churches also. Not even to St. Paul was it fully revealed, up to the time of his last visit to Jerusalem, that all need of holy city and house had been done away in Christ. We do not agree with the words of a recent writer, "With

¹ Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. "Synagogue."

the vision of a statesman and a judge he saw that the Church must have an administrative centre, and he was loyal to Jerusalem and to the apostles there." Yet nothing, indeed, is more praiseworthy in St. Paul than the manner in which he ever strove to bring the Churches which he founded among the heathen into the unity of the body of Christ, by binding them, by every means in his power, to the mother Church in the holy city. "Absolutely firm in what he believed to be right; absolutely conciliatory and courteous wherever conciliation is possible; full of respect for the older apostles, consulting them about his plans and intentions; full of joy when he found that they were in entire agreement with him; carrying help to them with an air of deference, as of one receiving, not conferring, aid. It is a model of behaviour in a younger and more energetic man towards a body of authoritative seniors." ¹

And this is the more remarkable because more than once he asserts his own entire independence of them, and his equality with, if not superiority over, them as "an apostle not of man nor by man, but by the Lord Jesus Christ"; "who laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was in me."

This is most noteworthy in the case of St. Paul's last missionary journey and last visit to Jerusalem. He collects alms from the Churches of Galatia, Macedonia, and Greece for the poor saints in Jeru-

¹ Ramsay.

salem; brings with him six Gentile brothers as representatives of the Churches; treats the college of presbyters and their president St. James in the same conciliatory and courteous spirit as he had treated the apostles on former visits; and solicits the prayers of Roman Christians, "that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints." When he arrives in Jerusalem he is advised by St. James and all the elders, as a matter of expediency, to take a principal part with four Christian brothers in a Jewish ceremony in which offering a sacrifice on the altar was a part (Num. vi. 14). St. Paul does not seem to have had a thought that doing so was inconsistent with his calling as the Apostle of the Gentiles.

The Christian community in Judæa was not regarded as a separate religion; they were only regarded as one of the many synagogues of the various sects into which the *Ecclesia* of the Jews was divided, while all were bound together by their reverence for the one temple. To the Christians as well as to the Jews there was no earthly temple, altar, priesthood, or sacrifice except those in the holy city. An inspired writer at a later date, probably about A.D. 68, could say of our Lord Himself, "If He were on earth He would not be a priest, seeing that there *are* priests that offer gifts according to the law" (Heb. viii. 4). Nothing can be more evident than that there were no priests, altars, or sacrifices in the Christian synagogues before the fall of Jerusalem. If such were ever instituted in

the Christian *Ecclesia* it must have been after A.D. 70.

CHURCH ORGANISATION IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES
(EXCLUSIVE OF HEBREWS AND THE WRITINGS OF
ST. JOHN).

Much confusion has arisen from not distinguishing between the *organisation* of the *Ecclesia* as a *living* body and its organisation as that of any other body of men; also by not differentiating between what we call "the ministry of the Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11, 12) and the local ministry. On the former depended the *esse* of each Church; on the latter subsequently, owing to human weakness, depended the *bene esse* of it; and it was instituted by the apostles under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Acts xx. 28).

The two representative Churches, Jewish and Gentile, in Jerusalem and in Antioch existed and flourished for some time, having only "the ministry of the Spirit." In the former the twelve apostles ruled for a time as a college, with St. Peter as their president. The government was republican, not monarchical; St. Peter was in no sense monarch over his colleagues, or over the Church, as the bishops of Rome and of other Churches became in after ages. This form of government was temporary, for the apostles were not designed to become local ministers in the Church in Jerusalem or in any other Church.

The local Ministry.—The first order of local ministers in the Church in Jerusalem was formed after the model of the lowest order of ministers in the Jewish synagogues. They answered to the alms collectors, and were the beginning of what afterwards became the order of deacons in almost all, if not in all, churches (Acts vi.).

We next hear of a college of presbyters joined in counsel and government with the apostles (Acts xi. 30, xv. 2, 4, 6, 22, 23, xvi. 4). On the first of these occasions the presbyters are mentioned alone ; the apostles were probably absent from Jerusalem, and the presbyters were in sole charge. In the next stage of the history the apostles have disappeared, and the government of the Church is in the hands of the college of presbyters, with St. James the Lord's brother as their president (Acts xxi. 18). It was quite natural that St. James' relationship to our Lord, and his own striking personality and traditional asceticism, should have raised him to a position of authority above that of any ordinary president of a synagogue.

The Church in Antioch.—The case of this first Gentile Church is still more remarkable than that of the first Jewish Church. It not only existed, but grew into a fruit-bearing Church, sending forth the first missionaries to the heathen, before any order of local ministers was appointed over it. The only ministry we hear of in it, up to the mission of St. Paul and St. Barnabas, is "the ministry of the

Spirit." It was founded by "men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Greeks—preaching the Lord Jesus; and the hand of the Lord was with them." And when "the report concerning them came to the ears of the Church which was in Jerusalem," the Church "sent forth Barnabas—a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." Not even tradition has attempted to prove that St. Barnabas was consecrated Bishop of Antioch. Had St. Barnabas been desirous to have the pre-eminence among them, he would not have "gone to Tarsus to seek for Saul." For a whole year "*they* (Barnabas and Saul) were gathered together with the Church." And the result of their joint government was that, for the first time, the Christian *Ecclesia* is no longer regarded as a Jewish sect, but "the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." Antioch was soon after visited by another prophet, Agabus of Jerusalem; and in consequence of his having foretold the approach of a famine, the disciples set on foot the first Famine Relief Fund, and sent the money collected by it "to the presbyters in Jerusalem by the hands of Barnabas and Saul" (Acts xi. 30).

As to the other Churches of the Gentiles, we read that St. Paul and St. Barnabas on their return journey "appointed presbyters in every Church" (Acts xiv. 23); and that St. Paul on his third missionary journey summoned the presbyters of the Church in Ephesus to meet him at Miletus, and exhorted them

to “feed (ποιμαίνειν) the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood—over which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops (ἐπισκόπους).” In St. Paul’s nine Epistles to the seven Churches there is only one allusion to any order of the “local ministry”—“Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons” (Phil. i. 1). From this we learn that there were in the one Church at Philippi, as in that at Ephesus, a plurality of presbyters, who were also designated bishops.

In the Pastoral Epistles only two orders of the ministry are mentioned—*presbyters* or *bishops*; the term “bishop” being used in 1 Tim. iii. 1–7, and immediately followed by “deacons”; the term “presbyter” being used in Tit. i. 5, and the same officer being called “bishop” in ver. 7. St. James in his Epistle exhorts the sick to call the presbyters of the Church to pray over them (Jas. v. 14); and St. Peter exhorts the presbyters to feed (ποιμάνετε) the flock of God; and he calls himself their fellow-presbyter (ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος) (1 Pet. v. 1, 4). St. John twice styles himself “the presbyter” (2 John 1; 3 John 1). These are, we believe, all the passages in the New Testament in which any orders of the “local ministry” are mentioned by name. They all agree in testifying to the fact that *it was the organisation of the synagogue, and not that of the temple, that was perpetuated in the Christian Ecclesia.*

THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION.

The question, Which organisation, that of the temple or that of the synagogue, was perpetuated in the Christian *Ecclesia*? is one of vital importance to all who are sincerely desirous to obey our Lord's command, and to seek to cultivate the unity of the Spirit with all who are members of His body; for on it depends the answer to the question, Who are members of the body of Christ? Up to the time of the Reformation it was held, almost universally, for a thousand years in Christendom (though there were always bodies of Christians who denied it), that the ministers of the New Testament were *officially* sacerdotes, *i.e.* sacrificing priests, and that a real power, which was superhuman and Divine, was transmitted to them, by the sacrament of Laying on of Hands by bishops, in a direct line from the apostles and from Christ Himself; and this is the doctrine still taught by the Roman and the Orthodox Eastern Churches, and by many in the Anglican communion. This theory involves—(1) that the Episcopacy as it now exists was instituted by Jesus Christ; (2) that without episcopal ordination there can be no sacraments, no Church; (3) that the body of Christ is limited to those communities whose bishops can trace their descent from the twelve apostles, and that no others are members of Christ's body.

All the three bodies mentioned above agree that no non-Episcopalian is a member of the Catholic

Church; but they differ in their belief as to the state of "those that are without." (1) The Roman community say, "No Pope, no Christian!" (2) The Greeks, "No bishop, no Christian!"¹ (3) The Anglicans say, "Without a bishop one may be a Christian but not a Churchman, or a member of the body of Christ." Thus, according to the belief of these three bodies, Episcopalianism, in the form in which it now exists, is absolutely necessary to the *esse* of a Church, more necessary, in fact, than any other doctrine of the faith. It is no longer "by their fruits ye shall know them," nor by their living faith in a living Saviour, but by their belonging to Rome, Moscow, or Canterbury. Some in our own Church have exchanged the belief in "apostolic succession," which is a comprehensible term, for one quite incomprehensible and undefinable, namely, belief in the "historic Episcopacy." The con-

¹ The following is "Article X." of the Confession of Faith drawn up by the Council of Bethlehem on the 20th of March 1672, and signed by Dositheus, Patriarch of Jerusalem; Nectarius, ex-Patriarch, seven other prelates, and sixty-one other ecclesiastics:—

"That there is a visible Catholic Church; that episcopal government is necessary to it; that without this there can be neither Church nor Christian; that the power of the Episcopacy is received by succession; that the Episcopacy is entirely different from and superior to the priesthood" (Neale's *History of the Holy Eastern Church*, ii. 471).

It is a well-known rule of the Greek Church that no member of any other Christian body is admitted to her communion except on the condition of anathematizing all the members of his own Church. The present Czarina is, we believe, the only person in whose case an exception has been made to this rule.

sequence of such a doctrine is the excommunication of all other Reformed communities or Churches in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, America, Switzerland, France, and the British Empire, along with the purest and most missionary of all Churches, the Moravian.

SACERDOTALISM.

By sacerdotalism is meant the dogma that our Lord instituted in His Church a sacerdotal class of sacrificing priests who can, like the Aaronic priest, trace their descent by a regular line of spiritual ancestors through the apostles to the great High Priest, Jesus Christ. It is sad that so many earnest believers in the Lord Jesus Christ should be led to disbelieve in Episcopacy because of its supposed connection with sacerdotalism. It is true that, though Episcopacy can do very well without sacerdotalism, sacerdotalism cannot exist without Episcopacy. We must therefore ask, "Is there any foundation in Holy Scripture for the claim made by the sacerdotalist?" And we answer emphatically, that there is none whatever. For (1) all the passages which bear on the subject of the Christian ministry, without any exception, agree in proving that it was the organisation of the synagogue (with its deacons, presbyters, and president), and not that of the temple, that was perpetuated in the Christian Church. (2) The term *ἱερεύς* or *sacerdos* is not once used in Scripture, nor in any Christian writing in the first two centuries of the Christian era, for a

minister of Christ.¹ Neither "priest" nor "priesthood" occur in any of St. Paul's Epistles. St. Peter calls all Christians "a holy priesthood" and "a royal priesthood"; and St. John calls them "a kingdom and priests" (1 Pet. ii. 6, 9; Rev. i. 6). These are the only passages in Scripture in which these terms are used of Christians. (3) Until the fall of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), the Christians continued to revere the temple, priesthood, and sacrifices of the Old Dispensation, and did not as yet see that they were done away in Christ.

Many Christians are also prejudiced against Episcopacy (1) because of the unscriptural grounds upon which too many of its upholders base it; and (2) because the term *Episcopus* had a very different meaning in the days of the apostles and the apostolic Fathers from what it bears now. In order to prove that Episcopacy, as it now exists, is necessary

¹ Bishop Gore, who is a strong advocate of sacerdotalism, acknowledges that the term Priesthood is never applied to the Christian ministry till the end of the second century.

"It will be observed that, whereas the conception of the Christian ministry and pastorate of souls dates back behind our present period into the immemorial past (*sic*), it is only at the beginning of our period that the title of the priesthood begins to be applied to it. Irenæus and Clement do not speak of the Christian ministers as priests, while Tertullian and Origen do, so that it is only towards the end of the second century that sacerdotal terms begin to be applied to the clergy" (Gore, *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 196).

Irenæus died about A.D. 200. Tertullian was converted to Christianity about A.D. 192, and his literary activity lasted from A.D. 198 to A.D. 220. Origen was born about A.D. 186, and his writings belong entirely to the third century.

to the *esse* of a Church, it should be possible to show evidence that it was the *universal* custom of the apostles to consecrate a bishop over every Church they founded. But so far is this from the case, that there is no evidence in the writings of the apostles and of the apostolic Fathers that any apostle appointed a bishop to rule over any Church.

(1) *As to the twelve Apostles of the Circumcision.*—We have no account whatever in contemporary history of any Church, except that in Jerusalem, having been founded by them. St. Peter preached to a Gentile congregation in the house of Cornelius, and when they had been baptized by the Holy Ghost, gave direction that they should be baptized with water. Of their future history we know nothing. St. Peter preached, chiefly to Jews, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (1 Pet. i. 12; 2 Pet. i. 16); but the only order of ministers he mentions in those Churches is that of “presbyters” (1 Pet. v. 1). St. James also speaks of “presbyters” only (Jas. v. 14).

(2) *The Apostles of the Uncircumcision.*—St. Paul wrote his Epistle “To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints” in A.D. 60, probably thirty years after the gospel had first been preached in the great city, and we find no trace whatever of any order of local ministry there. From the last chapter of the Epistle we conclude that there was as yet no one body of Christians who could be called “*the Church in Rome.*” St. Paul mentions several

groups of disciples in different parts of the great metropolis, one of which he designates as "the Church in the house of Priscilla and Aquila," from which we infer that each several group was regarded by him as a Church. This may account for the fact that when "he called the chief of the Jews together" on his arrival in Rome, in A.D. 61, they seemed to be quite ignorant of the fact that there was a Christian *Ecclesia* in the city. There certainly was no bishop of the Church in Rome at that time.

The history of the two other Churches, Ephesus and Crete, throws important light on the question. St. Paul was liberated from his first imprisonment in the spring of A.D. 63, and closed his second imprisonment by suffering martyrdom in A.D. 67 or 68. In the four years that elapsed between the two imprisonments we can trace his steps, by the help of the Pastoral Epistles, to Crete, Miletus, Ephesus, Troas, Macedonia, and Nicopolis. Having preached the gospel in Crete, he left his brother missionary, Titus, there, to organise the Church and ordain presbyters. On bidding farewell to the Ephesians and starting for Macedonia, he left another brother missionary, Timothy, there to withstand the false teachers who had already appeared there, and to appoint presbyters and deacons. The work of Titus in Crete was of short duration, for the apostle summoned him to join him at Nicopolis, where he had "determined to spend the winter"; and we hear of him for the last time in Dalmatia

(2 Tim. iv. 10). Timothy's stay in Ephesus was not of much longer duration than that of Titus in Crete; for he, too, was called away by St. Paul to bring Mark with him to Rome (2 Tim. iv. 9, 11).

"It is the conception of a later date," says Lightfoot, "which represents Timothy as bishop of Ephesus, and Titus as bishop of Crete. St. Paul's own language implies that the position which they held was only temporary."

What we do know for certain is that (1) there was no bishop in either Crete or Ephesus in A.D. 63. (2) That St. Paul instructed his fellow-labourers to see that fit persons were appointed presbyters and deacons; and that, when he called them away from their respective spheres of temporary labour, he gave them no direction to appoint any Church officer higher than the rank of presbyter in either of the two Churches of Crete and Ephesus.

III.

THE THIRD GENERATION.

THE second of the three generations into which the history of the first century of the Christian Church divides itself, ends with the martyrdoms of St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. James the Lord's brother, about A.D. 68, and the entire disappearance from contemporary history of the names of all the other apostles, with the exception of St. John. The third generation covers a period of thirty-two years, from A.D. 68 to A.D. 100. The Epistle to the Hebrews forms the link between the first and second generation, and throws light on the organisation of the Church in the third, rather than in the second generation. It was probably written, about A.D. 68, to prepare the disciples for the change which must follow the destruction of the holy city and temple.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

Let us take our stand among the Christians in Jerusalem two years before the fall of the city. The Church in Jerusalem is still regarded by all Churches as the mother Church. To it the great

Apostle of the Gentiles, at the close of each of his missionary journeys, returned, ever striving to bind each infant Church, by the bonds of love, to the mother Church. The organisation of each Christian congregation or church was on the model of the Jewish synagogue, with a college of presbyters and deacons, and not on that of the temple, with high priest, priests, and Levites. To an Israelite this would seem to be no organisation at all. The central idea which bound them together as an *Ecclesia* was not the synagogue but the temple. The possibility of a universal *Ecclesia* with no central city or earthly house of God was inconceivable to them. They were beginning to realise the approaching doom of city and temple as foretold by Christ. To them, as well as to the Jew, the words city, temple, priest, altar, sacrifice only meant what they had meant to their fathers before Christ came, and the question which must have troubled them was, will God appoint another city, temple, altar, and sacrifice for us? for they saw not as yet that all these were done away in Christ. It was at this moment, we believe, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was inspired by the Holy Spirit to answer this question; and the answer it gives to it is of primary importance to the Church in all ages.

“In this connection,” says Bishop Westcott, “the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews is of the greatest moment. It offers a view of the organisation of the gospel in most respects singularly comprehensive, and it is not unlikely that the

imminent overthrow of the Jewish State gave occasion for dwelling on this aspect of the gospel. There is, however, one striking omission. The Epistle is almost silent as to *ecclesiastical* organisation. No one of the words which have come to represent the main ideas of Church government is used in it in its technical sense. The title 'apostle' is used only of Christ Himself. 'The Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Jesus' (iii. 1). The verb *ἐπισκοπεῖν*, in the one place where it occurs, suggests no thought of official oversight (xii. 15). 'The elders' are simply the heroes of the Old Testament dispensation (xi. 1). The word 'deacon' is not found in the book, nor is the term *Ecclesia* used in the sense of a particular Church or of the universal Church—'In the midst of the Church' (ii. 11); and, 'the Church of the firstborn' (xii. 23). The single term which indicates ordered discipline in the body is the most general, 'those that have the rule,' 'those that lead' (xiii. 7, 17, 24).

"With this exception the view given of the social embodiment of the gospel is most varied. Eight passages present it under five different aspects—(1) 'The world to come' (ii. 5). 'The Divine order in its fullest extent and realisation.' (2) 'The house of God' (iii. 2, x. 21). 'The relation of the order to God as its head and indweller.' (3) 'The city which hath foundations'; 'The city which is to come' (xi. 10, 16, xiii. 14, comp. viii. 11); 'The social constitution of the order.' (4) 'The vision of the fulness of the order' (xii. 22 ff.).

(5) 'A kingdom which cannot be shaken' (xii. 28, comp. 'A present kingdom' (Col. i. 13)."¹

Henceforth the words, "Jerusalem," "temple," "high priest," "priest," "sacrifice," were to have a new meaning. With the Epistle to the Hebrews on the eve of the fall of Jerusalem a new vocabulary was introduced, and the sphere of "the Israel of God" was transferred from earth to heaven. "We have a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God"; but it is "the new Jerusalem, Jerusalem that is above." We have a temple too; but it is "the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "We have a great High Priest, holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, who hath passed above the heavens." "The Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world," hath made the one sacrifice for sins for ever, and hath sat down at the right hand of God. When He gave up the ghost the veil of the temple was rent, and the types and shadows of the Mosaic dispensation passed away; but the veil still remained on the hearts of the "many myriads of Jews who believed—and who were all zealous for the law."² That veil was rent from top to bottom by the Epistle to the Hebrews.

What the Holy Land had been heretofore, heaven was to be henceforth to the Christian, and they all had now "boldness to enter into the Holiest of all, by the new and living way which He hath con-

¹ Westcott, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 384.

² Acts xxi. 20, R.V.

secrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.”¹ The Judaising Christians who had given so much trouble to St. Paul did not teach that there was a *new official* priesthood, an altar and a sacrifice in the Christian Church, but they taught that the worship of the old temple, altar, and sacrifice was still binding upon Christians. If our Lord and His apostles had instituted a new priesthood, altar, and sacrifice in the Church, there would have been no place for their false teaching. It remained for Christian priests, so called, to bring in this new heresy in after ages. There is no trace whatever in the Epistle to the Hebrews of any sacerdotal class in the Christian Church; rightly understood it makes such a class an impossibility.

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

But as the Epistle to the Hebrews is only a treatise on one particular subject, relating, indeed, to, and throwing much light on, the spiritual organisation of the Church, we need not wonder that we find nothing in it relating to ecclesiastical organisation. For this we must look to the writings of St. John.

St. John, “the son of thunder,” “the disciple whom Jesus loved,” ὁ Ἐπιστήθιος, *he who ever leant on Jesus’ breast*, “the Theologos” or “the Divine,” was above all others the burning and shining lamp of these thirty years. He was privileged to close the Canon of Scripture by his inspired writings, but

¹ Heb. x. 19, 20.

there is no certainty as to the exact date or place of the writing of any one of them. He mentions his own name only thrice (Rev. i. 1, 4, 9). He describes himself as "a slave of Jesus Christ," as "your brother, and partaker with you in the kingdom of Jesus Christ"; and twice he calls himself "the elder" or "presbyter" (Rev. i. 1, 9; 2 John 1; 3 John 1).

Of the events of his life during these thirty years we can only discover from his writings—(1) that the seven Churches in Asia were the special objects of his care; (2) that in some persecution of the Christians he was banished to Patmos, and probably wrote the Apocalypse there; (3) that, like St. Paul, he had to encounter the opposition not only of the heathen, but that of "false prophets" (1 John iv. 1); of "many deceivers" (2 John 7); and of one who, in a railing and malicious spirit, opposed the work of the missionaries, and disputed St. John's authority (3 John 9).

HERESY AND FALSE DOCTRINE.

The chief light cast by the writings of St. John on the history of the Church relates to the rise of heresies and the growth of false doctrine in the Church. "Many false prophets have gone out into the world;" "even now there have arisen many Antichrists;" "Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not—prating against us with wicked words; and not content

therewith, doth not receive the brethren, and them that would he forbiddeth, and casteth them out of the Church" (1 John ii. 18, iv. 1; 2 John 7; 3 John 9, 10).

The Church in Ephesus has left its first love; the seeds of evil, alluded to by St. Paul in his Pastoral Epistles, have grown into a heresy called that of "the Nicolaitanes"; "Grievous wolves have entered in among them, not sparing the flock; and from among themselves have arisen men speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them" (comp. Acts xx. 29, 30, and Rev. ii. 2, 6). But the Ephesian Christians have tried them, found them false, and rejected them; and have hated the works of the Nicolaitanes.

Worse still is the state of the Church in Pergamos. They have tolerated the teaching of the Nicolaitanes, and retained among them false teachers "who held the doctrine of Balaam," and "made the house of God a house of merchandise." And worst of all is the state of the Church in Thyatira.

The mystery of iniquity, which "did already work" in St. Paul's day (2 Thess. ii. 7), and which, in ages yet to come, was destined to bring forth in the Church fruits similar to those which the influence of Jezebel brought forth to the ruin of Israel and Judah, was already visible to the anointed eye of Israel's last great seer, and was "making the house of God a den of thieves." The Church in Sardis, proud of her orthodoxy, order, and good works, had a name among men that she was living; but in God's

eyes she was dead. And the Church in Laodicea, rich in her own eyes, was in God's sight "the wretched one, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Only two out of the seven, the poor and persecuted Church in Smyrna, and the missionary Church in Philadelphia, were free from declension in doctrine and morals.

This is a strong presumption in favour of the late date of the Apocalypse. Alford says, "We have a constant and unswerving primitive tradition that St. John's exile took place and the Apocalypse was written towards the end of Domitian's reign."¹

Bishop Westcott's remarks about the Epistle to the Hebrews apply equally to the writings of St. John. His writings are more voluminous than those of all the rest of the twelve apostles; they are supplementary not only to the Synoptic Gospels, but to all the other books of the New Testament. We should have thought that a few words from him would have decided most of the controversies about Church orders and sacraments which have rent the Church for ages, but he wrote not a word on these subjects. More has been revealed through him on the *spiritual organisation* of the living body than by all other inspired writers, but nothing whatsoever on the *ecclesiastical* organisation of the visible Church. The keyword of his writings may be said to be, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." "No one of the words which have come to represent the

¹ About A.D. 96.

main ideas of Church government is used by him in its technical sense, with the exception of apostle," and that occurs only three times (Rev. ii. 2, xviii. 20, xxi. 4). No one of the titles bishop, presbyter, or deacon is ever used by him; nor could any one discover from his writings that Christ had instituted any sacraments in His Church.

THE SACRAMENTS.

St. John tells us more than any other inspired writer about the inward and spiritual graces of which the two sacraments are the outward and visible signs. In the third chapter of his Gospel he gives us our Lord's own statement of the grace of that holy baptism which had not yet been instituted; and in the sixth chapter His statement of the grace of the other sacrament. He leaves no doubt that the grace of the one is *spiritual life*, and of the other *spiritual food*. That Christ Himself is the life, and Christ Himself is the food, "the Bread of God which came down from heaven to give life unto the world." He repeats over and over again, often in the words of our Lord and often in his own words, that the means whereby we receive that life and that food is faith, and faith alone. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath life, and he that believeth not on the Son of God hath not life." "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." See John i. 12, v. 24-26,

vi. 40, xi. 25, 26; 1 John v. 10-13, and many other texts.

UNITY OR UNIFORMITY.

Of all the inspired writers, St. John is pre-eminently the evangelist of love and therefore of unity. "Little children, love one another," was his favourite exhortation. It is he who gives us the parable of the Vine; and our Lord's dying prayer that "they all may be one, even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." Is it the uniformity of all Christians under one *ecclesiastical* organisation and one visible head that he teaches us to seek, or the unity of the spirit between members of different Churches with different organisations? It is he who was inspired to substitute the New Testament symbol of the seven candlesticks, and Christ in the midst, for the Old Testament symbol of the one candlestick with seven branches. Is it possible that towards the close of the century, when the Churches of the East and the West were already beginning to differ in matters of Church order, that, if he thought that unity was to be attained by uniformity of outward organisation, he would have never alluded to it. In his Epistles, instead of telling the disciples that they were dependent on priest or minister for life or for teaching, he says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."

The word *Ecclesia* is never used in the singular

number by John for the Church Catholic or universal. In his second and third Epistles he uses it three times, each time of the *local assembly* of which the person to whom he wrote was a member. In the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia he uses it several times to designate the local congregation resident in each of the seven cities. Fifteen times he uses it in the plural, "the Churches." In some of these, perhaps in all, he means the universal Church. Thus, "the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven Churches." "And all the Churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the hearts and the reins." "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify these things unto the Churches" (Rev. i. 20, ii. 23, xxii. 16). In these three, and perhaps in the twelve other texts in which he uses *Ecclesia* in the plural number, the Church Catholic is designated; but St. John speaks of it not as one Church, but as many. Thus we see St. John uses the word *Ecclesia* in two senses. (α) In the singular always and sometimes in the plural for local Churches. (β) Never in the singular, but several times in the plural for the Catholic Church. The terms used by St. John to designate the Church universal are (1) the body of Christ; (2) the true Vine; (3) the seven golden candlesticks; (4) "the Churches."

IV.

CLEMENT OF ROME.

UNTIL the latter half of the nineteenth century the only writings that cast any light on the history of the Church from A.D. 70 to A.D. 100 were those of St. John. There are now two other treatises which cast light upon it, namely, "the Epistle of the Church of Rome to the Church of Corinth," commonly called "the Epistle of St. Clement of Rome," and "the Teaching of the Lord through His twelve Apostles to the Nations," known as "the Didaché." Though the amount of Church history contained in these documents is small, yet it is of very great value especially in the matter of the apostolic orders, of the ministry, and the holy sacraments.

THE EPISTLE OF THE CHURCH OF ROME TO THE CHURCH OF CORINTH.

We now possess three MSS. of the Epistle, "the Alexandrian," "the Constantinopolitan," and "the Syriac." The Alexandrian was presented to Charles I. by the Patriarch Cyril Lucar, A.D. 1628; but the MS. was in a mutilated state, one leaf of the ten

of which it consisted being wanting. It was not till 1875 that "the Constantinopolitan," which contains the missing leaf, was published by Philotheos Bryennios, the Metropolitan of Serræ, and brought in the following year to Europe; and this was soon supplemented by the discovery of the Syriac version. "We have now," says Bishop Lightfoot, "materials for restoring the original text of Clement very much better than in the case of any other Greek author, except the writers of the New Testament. The letter emanates from the Church of Rome, and throws no light upon the name of the person who acted as the amanuensis of the congregation, the first person plural being used throughout it. But tradition unanimously points to Clement as the writer. Thus Dionysius, chief pastor of the Church in Corinth, writing to the Romans, A.D. 170, refers to it as "the letter you wrote by Clement"; and Irenæus, about A.D. 180, "In the time of this Clement . . . the Church in Rome sent a most powerful letter to the Corinthians, urging them to peace."¹

"Contrast this attitude of the Church of Rome," says Bishop Lightfoot, "remonstrating with the Corinthians on terms of equality, and employing their chief pastor, for such we must conclude Clement was, with its attitude at the close of the second century, when Victor, the bishop, excommunicates the Churches of Asia Minor for clinging to an ancient custom in regard to the celebration

¹ Iren. *Adv. Hæres.* iii. 3.

of Easter. The substitution of the Bishop of Rome for the Church of Rome is an all-important point. . . . The later Roman theory supposes that the Church of Rome derives all its authority from the Bishop of Rome as the successor of St. Peter. History inverts the relation, and shows that, as a matter of fact, the power of the Bishop of Rome was built upon the power of the Church of Rome. . . . A very few years later than the date of Clement's letter, Ignatius writes to Rome. He is a staunch advocate of episcopacy. Of his six remaining letters one is addressed to a bishop as a bishop, and the other five all enforce the duty of the Churches whom he addresses to their respective bishops; yet in the letter to the Church of Rome there is not the faintest allusion to the episcopal office from first to last."

THE PERSONALITY OF CLEMENT.

"Of St. Clement of Rome, who does not mention himself in the epistle," says Dean Farrar, "we can learn nothing. . . . The account of his martyrdom is no earlier than the ninth century, and the various writings assigned to him are acknowledged forgeries." In fact, there is hardly a statement made with regard to him, by any ancient writer, which is not contradicted by others. "The letter of the Church of Rome to the Church of Corinth" is the only genuine writing of his that has come down to us. The author of "the Shepherd of Hermas" speaks of him as if he were his contemporary; and

says that his special function in the Church in Rome was to correspond with foreign Churches. This is Bishop Lightfoot's interpretation of *πέμψει οὖν Κλήμης εἰς τὰς πόλεις, ἐκείνῳ γὰρ ἐπιτέτραπται*.¹

The numerous legends about him; the many miracles which, according to tradition, were wrought by him; the romance of his martyrdom, in the Tauric Chersonese, by the order of Trajan; the fable that the sea every year, at the festival of his martyrdom, retired three miles for seven days, to enable the pilgrims to do homage to the white marble tomb which the angels had built over his body in the depths of the ocean;² the literature of "the Clementines," forged in his name, and the "Forged Decretals," on which the Bishops of Rome founded their claims to be regarded as the successors of St. Peter and the Vicegerent of Christ,—all prove that he was a man of strong personality, and of great influence in the Church. It follows as a matter of course that after ages should have set him on the throne of St. Peter, and agreed in giving him the title, *quite unknown to himself and his contemporaries*, of Bishop of Rome, when we remember that Clement is the only uninspired Christian writer of the first century whose name has come down to posterity; that he is the first on the list of the noble army of "Fathers of the Church"; that there is no other name in early annals of the Roman Church which could be used for the purpose,

¹ *Apostolic Age*, p. 98.

² Appendix A.

we cannot wonder that his name was made use of as a peg upon which to hang not only the doctrine of the apostolic succession of bishops, but that of the supremacy of the Pope of Rome.

Clement was probably a Hellenist of Jewish or proselyte parentage. He was well versed in the Septuagint, but evinces no knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures. The letter is full of quotations and illustrations taken from the Old Testament from Genesis to Malachi. Not one name of a heathen poet or hero occurs in it, whilst hardly one of the great names of the Old Testament is absent. He is a firm believer in the Divine origin of the Scriptures, and quotes them not as the word of man, but as the word of God. "Now the faith of Christ confirms all these admonitions; for He Himself by the Holy Spirit thus addresses us." And, "for the Holy Spirit saith," etc. etc. It is also of very special interest to note that some of the books of the New Testament were accepted by this first of "the Fathers" as the word of God. Thus he quotes from the Synoptic Gospels, "being specially mindful of the words of the Lord Jesus which He spake, teaching us meekness and long-suffering; for He says, Be ye merciful, that ye may obtain mercy," etc.; and, "Take up the Epistle of the blessed Apostle Paul—truly under the inspiration of the Spirit he wrote to you." To the Epistle to the Hebrews he alludes several times, "This is the way, brethren, in which we find our salvation. Jesus Christ, the High Priest of our offerings, the Defender

and Helper of our infirmity.—*Who being the effulgence of His majesty, is so much greater than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they*” (chap. 36 ; Heb. i. 4).

“We are disappointed,” says Dean Farrar, “but unreasonably so, to find that so much of Clement’s epistle is a mosaic of second-hand phrases ; that his quotations are oftentimes loose ; that he seriously appeals to the phoenix as an emblem of the resurrection ; that he draws unauthorised arguments from misquoted texts.—But, on the other hand, let us take notice that (1) we are thus furnished with an additional measure of the immense superiority of the writings of the apostles in their originality, power, and wisdom ; that (2) Clement shows himself in no respect more credulous than Herodotus, Pliny, Tacitus, and other writers of the highest rank in classical literature ; and that the humble Christians of those days were neither trained in the principles of criticism, nor did they write with books always at hand. Let us bear in mind that in its purity of moral tone and depth of spiritual intuition, the humble epistle of this primitive Christian stands immeasurably above the finest productions of Greek and Roman genius.”

THE DATE AND OCCASION OF WRITING THE EPISTLE.

Chap. 1. “The Church of God which sojourneth in Rome to the Church of God which sojourneth in

Corinth, and them who are called and sanctified by the will of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, grace to you, and peace be multiplied. By reason of the multiplied and repeated calamities and reverses that are befalling us, brethren, we consider that we have been somewhat tardy in giving heed to the matters of dispute that have arisen among you, dearly beloved, and to the detestable and unholy sedition, so alien and strange to the elect of God, which a few headstrong and self-willed persons have kindled to such a pitch of madness, that your name, once revered, renowned, and lovely in the sight of all men, hath been greatly reviled."

Bishop Lightfoot says that this exactly describes the persecutions which the Christians endured during the reign of Domitian; hence we conclude that the date of the Epistle is about A.D. 96-97.

The nature of the "sedition" is described more fully in chap. 47: "Take up the Epistle of the blessed Paul. What did he write to you at the time when the gospel first began to be preached? Truly, under the inspiration of the Spirit, he wrote to you concerning himself, Cephas, and Apollos, because even then parties had been formed among you. But that inclination for one above another entailed less guilt upon you, inasmuch as your partialities were then shown towards apostles, already of high reputation, and towards a man whom they approved. But now reflect who those

are who have perverted you, and lessened the fame of your far-famed brotherly love. It is disgraceful, beloved, yea highly disgraceful and unworthy of your conduct in Christ, that such a thing should be heard of, as that the most steadfast and ancient Church of the Corinthians should, on account of one or two persons, engage in sedition against its presbyters."

Chap. 2. "Who ever sojourned among you and . . . did not admire your sober and forbearing piety in Christ? Who did not publish abroad your magnificent habit of hospitality? Who did not congratulate you on your perfect and sound knowledge? For ye did all things without respect of persons, and ye walked after the ordinances of God, submitting yourselves to your rulers, and giving all fitting honour to your elders. On the young, too, ye enjoined that they should be modestly and seemly minded (*μέτρια καὶ σεργὰ νοεῖν*); and the women ye charged that they should perform all their duties with a blameless, seemly, and pure conscience, cherishing their own husbands as is meet; and ye taught them that, living by the rule of obedience, they should manage their households in seemliness and with all discretion. And ye were all lowly in mind and free from arrogance, yielding rather than claiming submission (*ὑποτασσόμενοι μᾶλλον ἢ ὑποτάσσοντες*), more glad to give than to receive (*ἡδίων διδόντες ἢ λαμβάνοντες*): no doubt in reference to Acts xx. 35.

Chap. 3. "Every kind of honour and happiness

was bestowed upon you, and then was fulfilled that which was written, 'My beloved did eat and drink, and was enlarged, and became fat, and kicked'; hence flowed emulation and envy, strife and sedition, persecution and disorder, war and captivity. So the worthless rose up against the honoured, those of no reputation against those who were renowned, the foolish against the wise, the young against those who were advanced in years."

As envy and jealousy is the root of all their divisions, he reminds them that it was by those sins death first entered the world; that they were the cause of the fratricide of Cain, of the flight of Jacob from the presence of Esau, of the persecution of Joseph by his brothers, of the flight of Moses from the face of Pharaoh to Midian, of the sin of Aaron and Miriam, of the destruction of Dathan and Abiram, and the source of all the evils that David suffered at the hands of Saul.

The sufferings of the Christian martyrs also arose from the same source. "Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through jealousy and envy the greatest and most righteous pillars (of the Church) have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the good apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two but numerous labours, and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy Paul

also obtained the reward of patient endurance, *after having been seven times thrown into prison*, driven from place to place and stoned, after having preached in the east and in the west . . . having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limits of the west, he suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world and went unto the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience."

The sufferings of the saints of the Old and New Testaments, caused by envy and jealousy, naturally lead our author upwards to a contemplation of the Christian virtues, humility, meekness, and self-control, so new to the proud Romans. He exhorts them to repent of envy and strife which "have overthrown great cities and rooted up mighty nations," and to emulate the obedience, humility, and patience of Abraham, Lot, Rahab, Elijah, Elisha, Ezekiel, Job, Moses, David, Daniel, Ananias, Azarias, and Mishaël, on the narratives of most of whom he dwells at some length. But while he sets before their eyes "the great cloud of witnesses," he teaches them above all to "look away to Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith," as the one perfect example. "Let us look steadfastly to the blood of Christ, and see how precious that blood is to God, which, having been shed for our salvation, has set the grace of repentance before the whole world."

Chaps. 13, 16. "Let us therefore, brethren, be lowly minded, laying aside all arrogance, conceit,

folly, and anger, and let us do that which is written. For the Holy Spirit saith, 'Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the strong man in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord.' For Christ is of the lowly minded, and not of those that exalt themselves over the flock. The Sceptre of the Majesty of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, came not in the pomp of arrogance or pride (though He might have done so), but in lowliness of mind, according as the Holy Spirit spake of Him, for He saith, 'Lord, who hath believed our report,' et seq. (Isa. liii.). Ye see, brethren, what is the example that has been given us; for, if the Lord thus humbled Himself, what should we do who have through Him come under the yoke of His grace."

Chaps. 14, 19, and 20. "Let us be kind one to another after the pattern of the tender mercy and benignity of our Creator. . . . Let us hasten and return unto the goal of peace which hath been handed down to us from the beginning, and let us look steadfastly unto the Father and Maker of the whole world; let us behold Him with our mind, let us look with the eyes of our soul into the depths of His long-suffering Will; let us note how free from anger He is to all His creatures."

"The heavens are moved by His direction and obey Him in peace. The sun, the moon, and the dancing stars, according to His appointment, circle in harmony within the bounds assigned to them. The earth beareth fruit at her proper seasons,

putting forth the fruit abundantly, and satisfieth both man and beasts and all living things, making no distinction."

"The inscrutable depths of the abysses are constrained by the same ordinances. The basin of the boundless sea, gathered by His workmanship into its reservoirs, passeth not the barriers by which it is surrounded; the winds in their several quarters fulfil their ministry at the proper season without disturbance; and the everflowing fountains, created for enjoyment and health, without fail give their breasts to sustain the life of men. All these things the great Creator and Master of the universe ordered to be in peace and concord, doing good to all things, but far beyond the rest to us who fled for refuge to his compassionate mercies through Christ Jesus, to whom be the glory and the majesty for ever and ever."

Chap. 46. "Why are these strifes, tumults, divisions, schisms, and wars among you? Have we not all one God and one Christ? Is there not one Spirit of grace poured out upon us? And have we not all one calling in Christ? Why do we divide and tear in pieces the members of Christ, and raise up strife against our own body? and why have we reached such a height of madness as to forget that we are all members of one another? Remember the words of our Lord Jesus when He said, 'Woe to that man by whom offences come, it were better for him that he had never been born, than that he should cast a stumbling-block before one of My elect.

Yea, it were better for him that a millstone should be hung about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depths of the sea, than that he should cast a stumbling-block before one of My little ones.' Your schism has subverted the faith of many, has given rise to doubt in many, and has caused grief to all, and still your sedition continueth."

On Love.

Chap. 49. "Let us therefore with all haste put an end to this state of things, and let us fall down before the Lord and beseech Him with tears that He may be mercifully reconciled to us, and restore us to our former seemly and holy practice of brotherly love. . . . Let him who has love in Christ keep the commandments of Christ. Who can describe the bond of the love of God? What man is able to tell the excellence of its beauty, as it ought to be told? The height to which love exalts is unspeakable. Love unites to God. Love covers a multitude of sins. Love beareth all things, is long-suffering in all things. There is nothing base, nothing arrogant in love. Love admits of no divisions; love gives rise to no seditions; love does all things in harmony. By love have all the elect of God been made perfect; without love nothing is well-pleasing to God. In love has the Master taken us unto Himself. On account of the love He bore us, Jesus Christ, our Lord, gave His blood for us by the will of God, His flesh for our flesh, and His soul for our souls."

On Confession and Absolution.

Chaps. 51, 52. "Let us therefore implore forgiveness for all those transgressions which through any of the wiles of the adversary we have committed. And those who have been the leaders of sedition and disagreement ought to have respect to the common hope. For such as live in fear and love would rather that they themselves were involved in suffering than their neighbour. . . . The Master, brethren, hath no need of anything whatsoever, and He desires nothing of any one except that confession be made unto Him. (Ἀπροσδεής, ἀδελφοί, ὁ Δεσπότης, ὑπάρχει τῶν ἀπάντων: οὐδὲν οὐδενὸς χρήζει εἰ μὴ τὸ ἐξομολογεῖσθαι αὐτῷ.) For, says the elect David, 'I will confess unto the Lord, and that will please Him more than a young bullock that has hoofs and horns. Let the poor see it and be glad.' And again he saith, 'Offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows unto the Most High. And call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me'; for the 'sacrifice of God is a broken spirit.'"

On Apostolic Order and Ministry.

Chap. 40. "These things therefore being manifest to us, and seeing that we have searched into the depths of Divine knowledge, it behoves us to do all things in order, which the Lord has commanded us to perform at stated times. He enjoins offerings to

be offered and services to be performed, and that not thoughtlessly or irregularly. Now the offerings and services He commanded to be performed with care, and not rashly or in a disorderly manner, but at fixed times and seasons. Where and by whom He desired these things to be done He Himself fixed by His supreme will, in order that all things being piously done according to His good pleasure, might be acceptable to Him. . . . For to the high priest his proper services have been assigned, and to the priests their proper place is appointed, and upon the Levites their proper ministry is laid. And the layman is bound by the laws that pertain to laymen."

Chap. 41. "Let each of you, brethren, give thanks to God in his own order, living in all good conscience, with becoming gravity, and not going beyond the rule of the ministry prescribed to him. Not in every place, brethren, are the continual sacrifices offered, or the freewill offerings, or the sin-offerings, and the trespass-offerings, but in Jerusalem only. And even there they are not offered in every place, but only at the altar before the temple. . . . Those therefore that do anything beyond that which is agreeable to His will are punished with death. You see, brethren, in proportion as we (Christians) have been deemed worthy of greater knowledge, so much the more are we placed in greater danger."

Bishop Lightfoot has the following remarks on the above. "This is evidently an instance from

the old dispensation to show that God will have His ministrations performed through definite persons, just as below in chap. 41. There is therefore no direct reference to the Christian ministry in 'high priest, priests, and Levites,' but it is an argument by analogy. Does the analogy then extend to the three orders? The answer to this seems to be that though the Episcopate appears to have been widely extended in Asia Minor at this time, the Epistle throughout only recognises two orders, presbyters and deacons, as existing at Corinth."

And again, "The present tense (*προσφέρονται*) has been thought to imply that the sacrifices were still offered, and the temple still standing, and therefore to fix the date of the Epistle before the destruction of Jerusalem. . . . To this very early date, however, there are insuperable difficulties. . . . Clement must, therefore, use the present tense as implying rather the permanence of the record and of the lesson contained therein than the continuance of the institution and of the practice itself. If any one doubt whether such a usage is natural, let him read the account of the Mosaic institutions and sacrifices in Josephus,¹ where the parallels to Clement's present tense are too numerous to be counted."²

Chap. 42. "The apostles received the gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ from God. So then Christ is from God, and the apostles

¹ *Ant.* iii. cc. 9, 10.

² Lightfoot.

from Christ. Both then came of the Will of God in the appointed order. Having therefore received a charge, and being fully persuaded by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and confirmed by the Word of God, they went forth with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand. And, thus preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first-fruits (of their labours), having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should afterwards believe.

“Nor was this any new thing, since indeed it was written many ages before concerning bishops and deacons; for thus saith the Scripture in a certain place,¹ ‘I will appoint their bishops in righteousness and their deacons in faith.’”

Chap. 43. “And what wonder is it if those in Christ who were entrusted with such a duty by God, appointed those ministers before mentioned, when the blessed Moses, also ‘a faithful servant in all his house,’ noted down in the sacred books all the injunctions which were given him, and when the other prophets also followed him, bearing witness with one consent to the ordinances which he appointed? For when rivalry arose concerning the

¹ The text which Clement so strangely misquotes, and on which he founds such a groundless argument, is found in Isa. lx. 17.

“I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness” (A.V. and R.V.). The LXX. or old Greek version thus renders the passage: *Καὶ δώσω τοὺς ἀρχοντας σου ἐν εἰρήνῃ, καὶ τοὺς ἐπίσκοπους σου [and thy bishops] ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ.*

priesthood. . . ." Here Clement brings in the story of Aaron's rod from Num. xvii., and adds, "What think ye, dearly beloved? Did not Moses know beforehand that this would happen? Undoubtedly he knew it, but he acted thus that there might be no sedition in Israel, and that the name of the true and only God might be glorified, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen."

Chap. 44. "For this cause therefore, having received complete foreknowledge, they appointed the aforesaid persons, and afterwards they provided a continuance, that when these should fall asleep,¹ other approved men should succeed to their ministration. Those therefore who were appointed by them, or afterwards by other men of repute with the consent of the whole Church, and who have ministered blamelessly to the flock of Christ, in lowliness of mind, peacefully and with all modesty, and who for a long time have borne a good report with all men, these persons we consider to have been unjustly thrust out from ministration. For it will be no light sin for us, if we thrust out

¹ "When these should fall asleep." "The aforesaid persons," i.e. the first generation of presbyters, appointed by the apostles themselves, and *αὐτῶν* too, will refer to the same persons. . . . The apostles, says Clement, first appointed approved persons to the ministry, and afterwards provided for a succession, so that vacancies by death should be filled by other approved men. The presbyters of Corinth, who had been rudely ejected from their offices, belonged to these two classes; some had been appointed by the apostles; others belonged to the second generation, having been appointed by persons immediately connected with the apostles" (Lightfoot).

those who have offered the gifts¹ of the Episcopate² unblameably and holily."

"Blessed are those presbyters who have gone before, seeing that their departure was fruitful

¹ "What does Clement mean by sacrifices, gifts, and offerings? In what sense are the presbyters said to have offered gifts? The answer to these questions must be sought in the following parallel passages:—

"Sec. 18. 'The sacrifices of God are a bruised spirit, a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise.' Secs. 35, 36. 'The sacrifice of praise will glorify Me, and there is a way by which I will show him the glory of God. This is the way, dearly beloved, in which we find Jesus Christ our Saviour, the High Priest of all our offerings, the Defender and Helper of our infirmity.' 41. 'Let every one of you, brethren, offer thanks to God in his own order, living in all good conscience, with becoming gravity, and not going beyond the rule of the ministry prescribed to him.' 52. 'The Master, brethren, stands in need of nothing whatsoever, and He desires nothing of any except that confession be made to Him. For the elect David saith, "I will confess unto the Lord, and that will please Him more than a young bullock that hath horns and hoofs." And again he saith, "Offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows unto the Most High. . . . For the sacrifice of God is a broken spirit."' Compare Heb. xiii. 15, 16, to which Epistle Clement is so largely indebted. These passages show in what sense the presbyters might be said to offer gifts. They led the prayers and praises of the congregation; they presented the alms and contributions to God, and asked His blessing on them in the name of the whole body. Hence Clement is careful to maintain that these offerings should be made at the right time and in the right place, and by the right persons. The first day of the week had been fixed by apostolic authority, not only for prayer and breaking of bread (Acts xx. 7), but also for collecting alms (1 Cor. xvi. 2); and the officers appointed by the same authority were the proper persons to receive and dispense the contributions" (*Ibid.*).

² "The Episcopate here is, of course, the office of presbyter" (*Ibid.*).

and ripe; for they have no fear lest any one should remove them from their appointed places. For we see that ye have displaced certain persons, though they were living honourably, from the ministration which they had kept blamelessly." There are only two other allusions in the Epistle to the Christian ministry, and they are as follows:—

Chap. 54. "Who then among you is noble minded? who compassionate? who full of love? Let him declare, 'If on my account sedition and disagreement and schism have arisen, I will depart and go away whithersoever ye desire, and I will do whatever the majority commands; only let the flock of God live at peace with the presbyters set over it.' He that acts thus will procure to himself great glory in the Lord, and every place will welcome him. For 'the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' These things they, who live a godly life that is never to be repented of, both have done and always will do."

Chap. 57. "Ye, therefore, who laid the foundation of this sedition, submit yourselves to the presbyters, and receive correction so as to repent, bending the knees of your hearts. Learn to be subject, laying aside the proud and arrogant self-confidence of your tongue. For it is better for you that ye should occupy a humble and honourable place in the flock of Christ, than that being highly exalted ye should be cast out from the hope of His people."

There is only one other passage in the epistle which is thought by some to allude to the Christian

ministry, but it is very uncertain whether it alludes to it or not: "Let us reverence the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was given for us. Let us esteem those who have the rule over us. Let us honour the aged among us (or the presbyters); let us train up the young in the fear of God, and let us direct our wives to that which is good."

From the above it is evident (1) that Clement believed in the Divine origin of the ministry of presbyters (or bishops) and deacons, but not more than St. Paul did when he said to the Ephesian presbyters, "Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops" (Acts xx. 28); (2) that he believed in the apostolic succession of these two orders of the ministry, and in the duty of every Christian to honour and obey those who were set over them; (3) that he knew of no third order of ministry as then existing in the Churches of Rome and Corinth. If there had been a bishop in the Church in Corinth, in the later meaning of the term, it is impossible that, writing on such a subject as a sedition of the laity against their presbyters, he should have ignored his existence.

Canon (now Bishop) Gore acknowledges this to be the case. "It is quite true that in Clement's Epistle presbyters are called bishops, and that there is no local authority in the Church at Corinth above the presbyters. Clement's language about submission to them postulates this. It may also be acknowledged that it is an unwarrantable hypothesis

that the see of the chief pastor was vacant when St. Clement wrote.”¹

As in every fully organised Jewish synagogue, there was a שָׂרֵי or president of the college of presbyters, and as the organisation of the Christian congregations (or synagogues, as St. James calls them) was after the pattern of the Jewish synagogue, we should have expected to find that, in the time of Clement, there would have been such an office in the Churches of Rome and Corinth; but if there was, there is no allusion to it in Clement's letter. In all probability there was a president, or chairman of the presbyters; but the office was not regarded as a third order of ministry; though from the letters of St. Ignatius we know that it was so regarded in the Churches of Asia before the close of the century.

¹ Gore, *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 322.

V.

THE DIDACHÉ, OR "THE TEACHING OF THE LORD, THROUGH THE TWELVE APOSTLES, TO THE NATIONS."

THE only other uninspired Christian writing of the first century, besides the Letter of Clement, is "the Didaché." It is the only other "solid, unquestioned piece of historical fact" which throws light on the apostolic order and ministry of the Church. The contrast between the literature of the Epistle of Clement and the Didaché is remarkable. The humility of the author of the Epistle, the entire absence of self-assertion, his never mentioning his own name, or using the personal pronoun of himself, though his marked personality shines through every letter, are charming. The author of the Didaché, on the other hand, uses the personal pronoun of himself throughout, and gives no indication of the Church from which he writes.

Again, while the Epistle is full of quotations from, and allusions to, the Old Testament, and breathes throughout the spirit of our Lord and His apostles, the Didaché contains only two quotations and hardly any allusion to the Old Testament,

and falls entirely short of a true conception of gospel teaching. "The moral instruction," says Gore, "is of an intensely Jewish character, far inferior to the Sermon on the Mount, and to St. James. It belongs rather to the enlightened synagogue than to the illuminated Church." But, with all its faults, the Didaché is most valuable to the student of Church history, because "it has thrown so strange and interesting a light over the simple organisation, faith, and worship of the early communities of Christians";¹ and also, because it is the first writing in which we can discern the early sowing of tares among the wheat.

It is contained in only one known MS., namely, the same "Jerusalem Codex" which contains the second version of Clement's Epistle, published by Bryennios in Constantinople in 1873, but not made known to the Western Church till 1883.

THE HISTORY OF THE DIDACHÉ IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH.

Considerable portions of it were incorporated into the Epistle of Barnabas (written at the beginning of the second century), into "the Shepherd of Hermas," and into the writings of Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 202). Book vii. of the *Apostolic Constitutions* (fourth century) is a paraphrase and enlargement of the Didaché. The first mention of its title is

¹ Farrar.

in Eusebius. After the sixth century we find no quotation from it.

THE AUTHOR.

It is very strange that the name of so energetic and forcible a writer should have passed into oblivion, and that none of the Fathers who have made such use of his writings should have preserved it. He was probably a Jewish Christian, and it is hardly possible that a mere layman could have written with such an assumption of ecclesiastical authority. We can only think that he was one of the Spirit-called order of "Teachers" of whom he makes mention; or at least that he considered himself to be one, and was so regarded by the Church.

THE DATE AND PLACE OF ITS COMPOSITION.

Its place in the Jerusalem Codex between the Epistle of Clement and the Epistles of Ignatius, and its being quoted in the Epistle of Barnabas, point to its probable date as not later than A.D. 100. Its contents lead to the same conclusion. Its ecclesiastical organisation is of the simplest kind; "presbyter" and "bishop" are still synonymous terms; there is no indication of the existence of a hierarchy, or of a diocesan or even congregational Episcopacy. The sacramental formulas contained in it are of the most elementary nature, and there is no

mention of heresies, not even of Montanism. All these facts point to a very early date. It gives no clue to the place of its birth. Historians are divided between Syria and Egypt; and as no other lands have been suggested, the choice seems to lie between these two. As we learn from the Epistles of Ignatius that from the beginning of the second century the terms "presbyter" and "bishop" were no longer synonymous in Asia Minor and Syria, and as the author makes no allusion to St. Paul, and was in no way influenced by his teaching, we think that Egypt was most probably the land of its birth.

ITS PURPOSE AND SCOPE.

It bears a very lofty title, "the Teaching of the Lord, through the Twelve Apostles, to the Nations." This is another presumption for a very early date. For though it professes to be for the Gentile world, the author has not heard of the apostles of the uncircumcision. It is divided into two parts—

PART I. §§ i.—vi.

This part may be called the first Christian Catechism. It consists of rudimentary, moral teaching about "the Two Ways." "Two Ways there are, one of life and one of death; but there is a great difference between the two ways. The way of life is this—first, thou shalt love the God who made thee; second, thy neighbour as thyself" (§ i.).

"But the way of death is this: first of all it is full of evil and full of curse; murders, adulteries, lusts, fornications, thefts, idolatries, magic arts, robberies," etc. (§ v.).

Interesting though this first attempt at a Christian catechism is, yet we pass on to the second part, as it alone treats of what belongs to our subject.

PART II. §§ vii.—xvi.

ON RITES, CEREMONIES, AND CHURCH ORGANISATION.

(1) § vii. *On Baptism.*

As Part I. is a catechism for the instruction of candidates for Baptism, an account of the mode of the administration of the sacrament, and further preparation for it follows.

"Now concerning baptism, thus baptize ye: having first uttered all these things (§§ i.—vi.) baptize in living water, 'into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' But if thou hast not living water, baptize in other water; and if thou canst not in cold, then in warm water. But if thou hast neither, pour water upon the head thrice, 'into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' But before baptism let the baptizer, and he that is to be baptized, fast, and as many others as may be able. But as for him that is to be baptized, thou shalt command him to fast one or two days before."

This is the only uninspired utterance of the Church of the first century on the manner of the administration of holy baptism. It adds nothing to the institution of the rite in Holy Scripture. The outward and visible sign is water, and water only. Living (*i.e.* spring or running) water to be preferred to stagnant, and cold to hot ; immersion to sprinkling ; but stagnant, or warm water, and sprinkling instead of immersion, in cases of necessity, lawful. The form of words, "Into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" is repeated twice. The author, having used the singular pronoun in addressing the candidate in Part I., now addresses the whole congregation in the plural pronoun "ye," as if the Church were the baptizers ; and then changes his style, and addresses him who acts for the Church in the singular pronoun, but gives no indication as to whom he is addressing, a minister or a layman.

There is no mention of prayer, *fasting having taken its place* ; as in § ix. he substituted "fast for them that persecute you," for the words of our Lord, "pray for them that persecute you."

§ iii. *On Fasting and Prayer.*

"But let not your fastings be like those of the hypocrites : for they fast on the second day of the week and on the fifth ; but do ye fast on the fourth and on the preparation (the sixth, Friday). Neither pray ye like the hypocrites, but as the Lord com-

manded in His Gospel, thus pray: 'Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debt, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil (one): for Thine is the power and the glory for ever.' Three times in the day pray ye thus."

This form agrees verbatim with the Authorised Version of St. Matthew, with the exception that the singular is used in "heaven" and in "debt." It contains the doxology, as does the A.V., but omits "Thy kingdom."

Fasting.—The Judaising spirit is manifest in the substitution of fasting for prayer; and in the heathen idea that fasting is in itself meritorious, and more efficacious with God than the simple prayer of the child to his Father. The reference to the Sermon on the Mount is apparent; but how lamentably has our author failed to comprehend the spirituality of our Lord's teaching! What a contrast is there between the above and Isa. lviii. 13, 14, and Matt. vi. 16–18. This injunction about fasting on certain days is the first instance, in the Christian Church, of "the teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" by which the Pharisees "made the word of God of none effect." There is no instance of a day, a week, or a month of fasting having been ordered by God in the Bible. The word *fast* does not occur in the Pentateuch; the religion of Moses was unique in this, that it was a religion of feasting and not of

fasting, a religion of "rejoicing with great joy before Jehovah." The word occurs only thrice in the Epistles of the New Testament in A.V., and one of these is omitted in R.V., and in one of the two that remain it means enforced hunger from want of food (2 Cor. xi. 27); but in the Didaché, which is only a little longer than the Epistle to the Galatians, it occurs twenty-eight times.

The Jewish Church had instituted days and weeks and months of fast, but our Lord encouraged His disciples ostentatiously to disobey her.

It is sad in our days to hear of bishops of the "Protestant religion established by law" giving dispensations to their clergy not to keep the fasts of the Church; as well might the apostles have asked Caiaphas for a dispensation to break their fast with the Master.

On the Eucharist.

§ ix. "Now concerning the Eucharist, thus give thanks. First concerning the cup: We thank Thee, our Father, for the holy vine of David Thy servant, which Thou hast made known unto us through Jesus Thy Servant. To Thee be the glory for ever. And concerning the broken bread (κλάσματος): We thank Thee, our Father, for the life and knowledge which Thou hast made known to us through Jesus Thy Servant. To Thee be the glory for ever. Just as that broken bread (κλάσμα) was scattered over the hills, and having been gathered

together, became one, so let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom; for Thine is the power and the glory for ever. But let no one eat of your Eucharist except those that have been baptized into the name of the Lord; for with regard to this the Lord said, 'Give not that which is holy to the dogs.'"

§ x. "Now after ye are filled thus give thanks: We thank Thee, holy Father, for Thy holy name, which Thou hast caused to dwell in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which Thou hast made known to us through Jesus Thy Servant. . . . Remember, O Lord, Thy Church, to defend her from every evil, and to make her perfect in Thy love; and gather her, having been sanctified, from the four winds, into Thy everlasting kingdom, which Thou hast prepared for ever; for Thine is the power and the glory for ever. Let grace come, and let this world pass away. Hosanna to the Son of David! Who-soever is holy, let him come; whoever is not, let him repent. Maranatha. Amen."

"But permit the prophets to give thanks as much as they will."

There is a manifest allusion here to the feast which our Lord gave to the five thousand. "And concerning the broken bread (*κλάσματος*),—just as this broken bread (*κλάσμα*) was scattered over the hills" (see John vi. 13). "And now after ye are filled" (*μετὰ δὲ τὸ ἐμπλησθῆναι*), compare John vi. 12 (*ὥς δὲ ἐνεπλήσθησαν*).

Compare this account of a Christian Eucharist at the end of the century with the accounts contained in Acts ii. 42, 46, 47 (R.V.), xx. 7–11; 1 Cor. x. xi., from all of which it appears that the Lord's Supper was generally partaken of in the evening, as part of an ordinary meal or of the *Agapé*.

There is one other allusion to the Holy Communion in the Didaché.

§ xiv. "But on the Lord's day (κατὰ κυριακὴν δὲ Κυρίου) do ye assemble and break bread, and give thanks, after confessing your transgressions, in order that your sacrifice may be pure. But every one that hath a controversy with his friend, let him not come together with you until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice may not be profaned. For this is that which was spoken by the Lord: 'At every place and time bring Me a pure sacrifice; for I am a great King, saith the Lord, and My name is marvellous among the nations.'"

The author had said before that God requires nothing of any one but to confess his sins to *Him*; he here rightly adds our Lord's teaching about being first reconciled to one's neighbour before offering one's gifts. Justin Martyr likewise uses the words "sacrifice" in connection with the Eucharist, but goes on to say, "prayers and thanksgivings, offered by the worthy, are the only perfect and acceptable sacrifice."¹

We have here an additional and independent proof that the first day of the week had received

¹ *Dial. c. Tryph.* ii. 117.

the title of "the Lord's day" before the end of the first century.

APOSTLES, PROPHETS, AND TEACHERS.

St. Paul says: "God set some in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers. . . . Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?" (1 Cor. xii. 28, 29). And again, "He gave some to be apostles, and some to be prophets, and some to be . . . teachers" (Eph. iv. 11). The following quotations from the Didaché are valuable as a proof from history that these gifts of the Spirit continued in the Church till the close of the first century, and that they were orders of a spiritual ministry, *quite distinct from the local orders of ministers*, who were chosen and ordained by man.

§ xi. *First Apostles.*

"But in regard to apostles and prophets, according to the ordinance of the gospel, so do ye. Now, let every apostle that comes to you be received as the Lord; but he shall not remain with you longer than one day. If, however, there be a necessity for it, he may tarry for a second day; but if he stays for three days he is a false prophet. And when an apostle departeth, let him take nothing but bread enough till he find another lodging; and if he ask for money, he is a false prophet."

It is very hard indeed to understand these

directions as to the treatment an apostle was to receive at the hands of the Church. He is placed above the prophet in the first rank of the gifts of the ascended Lord to His Church. Though differing from "the prophet," yet if he is a true apostle he is also a true prophet, for "if he asks for money he is a false prophet."

The word "apostle" occurs eighty times in the New Testament; forty-two times it is used for the twelve apostles of the circumcision; twenty-one times for the apostles of the uncircumcision, St. Paul and St. Barnabas; once our Lord is called "the Apostle . . . of our profession"; twice it is used for "the messengers of the Churches" (2 Cor. viii. 23; Phil. ii. 25). Once it occurs as a common term for the apostles of the circumcision and of the uncircumcision, and three times we read of false apostles. In Rom. xvi. 7, Andronicus and Junia are said to be "of note among the apostles"; and in seven other passages (Luke xi. 49; 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29; Eph. ii. 20, iii. 5, iv. 11; Rev. xviii. 20) it is used in a wider sense, almost the same as "missionary."

Of these seven different uses of the word the author of the Didaché must mean either "messenger of the Churches" or "missionary." It seems impossible that he could mean the former, for he classes the apostle with the prophet, and even places him above him, as St. Paul does. He is evidently speaking of a permanent office of one specially endued with prophetic gifts, and recognised as such

by the Church. His words cannot be construed as meaning "if any Church send a messenger to you." If they were missionaries in our sense of the word, it is hard indeed to account for the restrictions imposed upon them as to the time of their stay in any one place. Yet, notwithstanding this difficulty, we think they are the same as those of whom St. John wrote about the same time, "for His name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow-helpers to the truth" (3 John 7, 8).

Secondly Prophets.—"And every prophet who speaketh in the spirit, ye shall not try nor judge; for every other sin shall be forgiven, but this shall not be forgiven. But not every one that speaketh in the spirit is a prophet, but only he who hath the ways of the Lord. Thus by their ways shall the false prophet and the true prophet be known. And every prophet who ordereth a meal and eateth of it is a false prophet; and every prophet who teaches the truth but does not practise it is a false prophet; and any prophet who has been proved and found to be a true one, and who acts according to the mystery of the Church on earth, though he does not teach others to do all that he himself doeth, yet he shall not be judged by you, for he has his judgment with God; for the prophets of old acted in the same manner. But whoever saith in the spirit, 'Give me money or any other thing,' ye shall not hearken to him; but if he ask for anything for others who are in need, let no one judge him."

§ xii. *On the Duty of Hospitality to Apostles,
Prophets, and others.*

“But let every one who cometh in the name of the Lord be received, but afterwards ye shall test and know him; for ye shall have understanding right and left. If he who comes to you be a traveller, help him as much as ye can; but he shall not stay with you for more than two days, or, if there be a necessity, for three. And if he be an artisan, and wishes to take up his abode among you, let him work and so eat; and if he have no trade, make provision according to your understanding, that no Christian live among you as an idler. If any one will not act thus, he is one who makes trade of Christ: beware of such persons.”

§ xiii. *On Prophets and Teachers.*

“Now every true prophet who wishes to take up his abode among you is worthy of his support. Likewise a true ‘teacher,’ he also like a labourer is worthy of his sustenance. All the first-fruits then of wine-press and threshing-floor, of oxen and sheep, thou shalt take and give to the prophets; for they are your chief priests.¹ But if ye have no prophet, ye shall give them to the poor. And when thou bakest bread, take the first of it and give it according to the commandment. In like manner when thou openest a jar of wine or oil, take the first of it and give it to the prophets; and take the first of money

¹ Appendix B.

and clothing and of every possession and give it as may seem fit to thee according to the commandment."

There can be no doubt that the prophets here spoken of are of the same order as the prophets of whom we read in the Acts and Epistles. Like the "apostle" and "teacher," their calling was "neither of man, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised Him from the dead." Every apostle was expected to be a prophet, but every prophet was not an apostle. If the apostle be unfaithful, "he is a false prophet." His special call is that of an itinerant preacher to the heathen. On the other hand, the mission of the prophet was to the Church. For "propheying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them that believe" (1 Cor. xiv. 22).

According to the Didaché, the prophets took precedence of the local ministers.—In the administration of the Lord's Supper the Church is to permit the prophet to give thanks as much as he will. To judge a prophet is the sin that shall never be forgiven. The tithes are to be given to him, strange to say, instead of to the poor.

The author evidently thought that the sin of judging a prophet was the sin against the Holy Ghost (Matt. xii. 31). It was the sin of "despising prophecy" of which the Pharisees were guilty when our Lord spoke those words, "Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoso speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall never be forgiven him"; and again, "He that

receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward,—and he that despiseth you despiseth Me, and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me." If our author was wrong in using such strong language, how much worse are they who, notwithstanding all the warnings of Scripture, "despise prophesyings."

The gift of prophesying has never been withdrawn from the Church.

"These thirteenth century saints (St. Francis of Assisi and others)," says Sabatier, "were in fact true prophets, apostles like St. Paul, not as the result of a canonical consecration, but by the interior order of the Spirit; they were the witnesses of liberty against authority."¹

"It is not easy to hear and to apply to oneself the exhortation of preachers who, aloft in the pulpit, seem to be carrying out a mere formality. It is just as difficult to escape from the appeal of a layman who walks at our side. The amazing multitude of Protestant sects is due in a great degree to this superiority of lay preaching over clerical. The most brilliant orators of the Christian pulpit are bad converters; their eloquent appeals cultivate the imagination and lead a few men of the world to the foot of the altar; but let a peasant or a working man speak to those whom he meets a few simple words going directly to the conscience, and the man is always impressed, often won."²

¹ *The Life of St. Francis d'Assisi*, Introduction, p. xv.

² *Ibid.* p. 71.

The multitude of sects is not due to the blessing of God the Holy Spirit on the words of the prophets, but to the rejection of them by those who sit in Moses' seat.

But to return to our document. The "prophet" and "teacher" are the only members of the Christian community who are exempted from the injunction that "no Christian live with you as an idler," or in the words of St. Paul, "If any man do not work, neither shall he eat." "Every first-fruits then of wine-press and threshing-floor, of oxen and sheep, thou shalt take and give to the prophets, for they are your *chief priests*. But if ye have no prophet, give it to the poor."¹

Here the broadest distinction is drawn between the extraordinary orders of "apostles" and "prophets," and the ordinary local orders of "bishop" and "deacon." There appears to have been no provision made for the maintenance of the local clergy; they, like the lay members of the Church, had to live by the labour of their hands. If there were no resident "prophet" the tithes were to be given, not to the clergy, but to the poor. We cannot see how the poor did not suffer from a prophet taking up his residence in a Church. Some light may be thrown upon this question by the injunction in § xi.: "But whatever prophet saith in the Spirit, 'Give me money or anything else,' ye shall not hearken to him; but if he ask you to give him anything for one who is in need, let no man judge him." The

¹ Didaché.

prophet may have been fully trusted to look after the interests of the poor, so that they should not lose by his receiving the tithes. He was at liberty to beg for them, but not for himself.

Teachers.

“Likewise also a true teacher, he also, like a labourer, is worthy of sustenance” (§ xiii.). In the section immediately preceding the author has written, “Make provision that no Christian live among you as an idler.” The only exceptions to this rule seem to have been the “prophet” and the “teacher.” Bishops and deacons appear to have been no exceptions to it.

§ xv. *The Local Ministry of Bishops and Deacons.*

“Now appoint for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord; men meek and not lovers of money, true men and proved: for *they too render you the service of prophets and teachers.* Therefore neglect them not; for they are those who should be honoured by you, along with the prophets and teachers. And reprove ye one another, not in anger, but in peace, as ye have it in the Gospel; and to any one who erreth against another let no man speak, nor let him hear anything from you until he repent. But as to your prayers, and your alms, and all your deeds, so do them as ye have received it in the Gospel of our Lord.”

This is the last testimony of history in the first century to the apostolic orders of ministry in the Christian Church, and it agrees with all previous testimonies. It tells us that (1) the Spirit-called orders of apostle, prophet, and teacher were the first and highest, and that they were quite distinct from the local orders of ministry. (2) That, according to apostolic order and precedent, every Church was to appoint for itself two orders of ministers, bishops or presbyters, and deacons.—*N.B.* The verb used by the author of the Didaché, “Now *appoint* (χειροτονήσατε) for yourselves,” is the same as that used by St. Luke of the appointment of presbyters by St. Paul and St. Barnabas on their first missionary journey (χειροτονήσαντες, Acts xiv. 23). (3) That bishops and deacons were also expected to have the gifts of prophecy and teaching as well as the prophets and teachers. (4) That the gifts of prophecy and teaching were not confined to the Spirit-called and man-appointed orders of ministry, but there was a ministry of the lay members of the body also, and they were to “reprove one another, not in anger, but in peace, as ye have it in the Gospel.”

Nothing proves more clearly the lamentable change for the worse which came over the Church in the following two centuries, than a comparison of that part of the *Apostolic Constitutions* which is a paraphrase of the Didaché with the Didaché itself. The highest order of ministry, that of “apostles, prophets, and teachers,” has ceased to exist, and the three orders are those of “bishops, presbyters,

and deacons.”¹ According to the Didaché, if there were no prophet residing among them, the tithes were given to the poor; and if there were a prophet, to him; and the first-fruits were given to the prophets (§ xiii.); but in the *Apostolic Constitutions* the injunction is to give “a tenth to the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the stranger,” and to give “to the priests all the first-fruits of the hot bread” along with other gifts.

“In the *Apostolic Constitutions*,” says Bishop Gore, “there is an intense insistency on the necessity for ordination to qualify a man for any ministerial work; there is a reiterated magnifying of the office of bishops, whether as priests ministering the oblations of the new covenant, especially the Eucharistic sacrifice, or as prophets and kings; ‘he is your king and ruler,’ nay, more, ‘he is your earthly god after God’; or as mediators between God and His people, ‘as, after God, their fathers begetting them to adoption through water and the Holy Ghost.’ There is an emphatic distinction drawn between the powers of a bishop and those of a presbyter; *the distinction of names is a distinction of realities.*”²

There was no such distinction of names in the first century, and therefore no distinction of realities. With these novel doctrines of (1) the necessity of ordination to fit a child of God to do *any* work for Him; (2) the magnifying of the human bishop and

¹ *Apost. Const.* vii. 31.

² *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 147.

priest as mediators between God and man, not only did the ministries of the "prophet and teacher" cease, but along with them the ministry of the laity also, and Christians as such ceased to be kings and priests to God.

§ xvi. *Conclusion of the Didaché.*

"Watch for your life's sake; let not your lamps go out, nor your loins be loosed; but be ye ready, for ye know not the hour in which your Lord cometh. But come together frequently, and seek those things which benefit your souls; for the whole time of your faith will not profit you, if ye be not made perfect in the last time. For in the last days false prophets and corrupters shall be multiplied, the sheep shall be turned into wolves, and love turned into hate. For when lawlessness increaseth, they shall hate and persecute and deliver up one another, and then shall the world-deceiver appear as the Son of God, and shall do signs and wonders, and the earth shall be given into his hands, and he shall commit iniquities, such as were never committed since the beginning. Then all created men shall come into the fire of trial, and many shall be offended and shall perish, but they who endure in their faith shall be saved from under the curse. And then shall the signs of truth appear. First the sign of an opening in the heaven, then the sign of a sound of a trumpet, and thirdly a resurrection of the dead; yet not of all,

but as it has been said: 'The Lord shall come, and all His saints with Him.' Then shall the world see the Lord come upon the clouds of heaven" (compare 1 Cor. xv. 23; 1 Thess. iii. 13-18, and Rev. xx. 4-6).

VI.

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH.

VERY little is known about Ignatius, and all that we do know is connected with his martyrdom by order of the Emperor Trajan (A.D. 110–115). If it were not for his tragic end his name might not have come down to posterity. We first see him as he is being carried by Roman soldiers from Antioch to Rome, there to be thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheatre. We hear from his own lips a touching story of the hardships he endured on his journey. "From Syria, even unto Rome, I fight with wild beasts, both by land and sea, both by night and day, being bound to ten leopards,—I mean a band of soldiers, who, when they receive benefits, show themselves all the worse. But I am the more instructed by their injuries to act as a disciple of Christ; yet I am not hereby justified" (*Ad Rom.* v.). Like Paul, he was indulged with a certain amount of liberty, and allowed to hold intercourse with the Christian communities through whom he passed on his way to Rome. But the indulgence which the soldiers gave him was not entirely, if at all, from motives of humanity. The "benefits" he

speaks of were probably presents given by the Christians to them, in the hope that they would treat the venerable saint with greater leniency; but, as is often the case with jailers in the East, they only treated him with greater severity that they might get larger presents from his friends. All we know of the route by which the martyr was taken to Rome is that he passed through Philadelphia, Smyrna, Troas, Neapolis, and Philippi.

He spent some days in Smyrna, and was met there by deputies from the Churches in Tralles, Magnesia, and Ephesus. From Magnesia came the Bishop Damas, the presbyters Bassus and Apollonius, and the deacon Zotion. From Tralles came Bishop Polybius, who brought him "some godly token of good will (*τὴν κατὰ θεὸν εὐνοίαν*), such as Epaphroditus brought from the Philippians to Paul in his prison in Rome. And from Ephesus, which was only forty miles from Smyrna, came a more numerous deputation, headed by the Bishop Onesimus. His stay in Smyrna was of incalculable value to the Church for all ages, for it gave him leisure to write four of the seven precious letters which, with the letter of Polycarp to the Philippians, are not only the sole materials from which we know anything for certain about the martyr bishop himself, but which also illuminate a page in the history of the Church which, without them, would be shrouded in darkness. These four letters were to the Churches in Ephesus, Magnesia, and Tralles, which the respective bishops took back with them

to their flocks, and the Epistle to the Church in Rome.

He left Smyrna soon after August 24, the date given in his letter to the Romans, and was taken thence to Alexandria Troas. One of the Ephesian delegates, Burrhus, accompanied him as far as Troas ; and here he was joined by two members of his own flock, who brought him the good news that the Church at Antioch was now at peace.

Here he wrote three more letters to the Churches of Philadelphia and Smyrna, both of which places he had so recently visited, and to Polycarp, the bishop of the Church in Smyrna. From Troas he sailed to Neapolis, and his letters do not enable us to follow him any further on his journey ; but from the letter of Polycarp to the Philippians we learn that he spent some time in that city, and was taken thence to Rome.

This is the last item of genuine history that we have about the noble martyr. At Philippi he was joined by Zosimus and Rufus and others who, like himself, were being carried in chains to Rome ; and Polycarp asks for "any more certain information you may have obtained respecting both Ignatius himself and those that were with him."

HIS MARTYRDOM.

After the departure of the prisoners from Philippi all is uncertain. All narratives contained in the different martyrologies are legendary and confessedly

untrustworthy. Though the Roman Christians preserved not a single incident of his martyrdom, there is no doubt that he "died under the claws and teeth of wild beasts in the Flavian amphitheatre." The aged saint was just such a victim as was necessary for the wild-beast shows in which Trajan (the best of Roman emperors) delighted, and for which it was always desired to secure victims of venerable and noble appearance. Like St. Peter and St. Paul, no record of his last hours has survived him, but it is enough to know that his name is with theirs written in the Lamb's Book of Life in the list of "the noble army of martyrs."

The Epistles of Ignatius not only carry us into a new century, but they introduce us to a new era of Church history, marked by new and special characteristics. (1) All of the seven, with the exception of the letter to the Church in Rome, abound in denunciations of heretical teaching in the Churches. (2) There is in them a reiterated and intense insistency on the duty of all Christians "to obey them that have the rule over them, and submit themselves" to them (Heb. xiii. 17). And (3) they contain a new nomenclature of the orders of the apostolic ministry. It is possible that the necessity for (1) accounts for (2) and (3).

I. HERESIES.

Asia Minor was at this time a hotbed of false doctrine and schismatical tendencies. The particular

type of heresy against which Ignatius warns the Asiatic Christians was, according to Lightfoot, of the same category with that "of the Colossian Church, of the Pastoral Epistles, of the Apocalypse, and of the Cerinthians. It is Judaism crossed with Gnosticism." It was a form of Docetic Judaism, and its followers denied the reality of the birth, passion, and resurrection, in fact of the whole human life, of the Lord Jesus Christ. In his letter to the Trallians, Ignatius plays on the name Docete (*δοκῆται*) by which these heretics were known: "Certain persons who are godless, *i.e.* unbelievers, say that He suffered only in semblance (*τὸ δοκεῖν*), being themselves mere semblance (*αὐτοὶ ὄντες τὸ δοκεῖν*)." He describes them as "treacherous wolves, devouring the flock" (*Ad Phil.* ii.). "They are mad dogs, biting by stealth" (*Ad Eph.* vii.); "noxious herbs, which are not the husbandry of Jesus Christ" (*Ad Phil.* iii.).

As an antidote against their pernicious teaching, he reiterates over and over again the reality of the historic events of the life and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, "For our God Jesus Christ was conceived in the womb by Mary, of the seed of David, but also of the Holy Ghost; and He was born and was baptized" (*Ad Eph.* xviii.); and "Be ye fully persuaded concerning the birth, the passion, and the resurrection, which took place in the time of the government of Pontius Pilate; for these things were truly and certainly done by Jesus Christ our hope; from which hope may it not befall any

of you to be turned aside" (*Ad Mag.* xi.); and "Be ye deaf therefore when any man speaketh to you apart from Jesus Christ, who was of the race of David, who was the son of Mary; who was truly born, and ate and drank; who was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate," etc. (*Ad Trall.* ix.). "I have perceived that ye are established in faith immovable—fully persuaded, as touching our Lord, that He is truly of the seed of David according to the flesh; but the Son of God, by the Divine will and power, truly born of a virgin, and baptized by John" (*Ad Smyr.* i.).

Compare the antidote given by St. Paul to the Colossians for the same poison (Col. i. 15–20), and by St. John in his first Epistle, also addressed to the same neighbourhood; and the latter's description of the heresy, "This is the antichrist, even he that denieth the Father and the Son."

We can trace the growth of this first of the wicked arts and plotting of the prince of this world (τὰς κακοτεχνίας καὶ ἐνέδρας τοῦ ἄρχοντος τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) from its germ in the Colossian Church (A.D. 62) to its further development when St. Paul wrote his Pastoral Epistles (A.D. 66, 67). We find it grown stronger in the Epistles to the seven Churches in the last decade of the first century; and now the aged martyr, thirsting for the cup that he is about to drink, is grieved in his spirit at the terrible growth of "the strange herbage," and writes to five of these Churches of Asia to warn them of their danger, and reprove

some of them sharply for entertaining it amongst them.

We have seen that the bishops of the Churches in Ephesus, Tralles, and Magnesia, accompanied by delegates from each Church, met Ignatius in Smyrna. The heart of the martyr was gladdened by these tokens of love and sympathy, but it was also saddened by the news they brought of the harm that was being done by false teachers in all the Churches. This was the occasion of his writing the first three letters to the Churches of Asia.

The heresy was in all cases a Docetic Judaism; but in some Churches the Docetic, and in others the Judaic element was predominant.

To the Ephesians he writes: "I have learned that certain persons passed through you from yonder¹ bringing evil doctrine; whom ye suffered not to sow seed among you, for ye stopped your ears, so that ye might not receive the seed sown by them" (compare Acts xx. 28-31; Rev. ii. 2).

In Magnesia the Judaic element was more manifest. He warns the Christians "not to be seduced by strange doctrines and antiquated fables." "To put away the vile leaven which hath waxed sour; not to live after the manner of Judaism; not to sabbatize, but to live according to the Lord's day"² (*Ad Mag.* x.).

¹ "The reference in ἐκείθεν (from yonder) must remain uncertain; but if it were necessary to name any place, Philadelphia would answer the conditions" (Lightfoot).

² This is the third mention in Christian literature of the Lord's day (Rev. i. 10; Didache xiv.).

In the letter to the Trallians "the denunciation of Docetism is fuller and more explicit than in any other of his letters. On the other hand, no allusion is made in it to the Judaic side of the heresy; but a comparison with his language elsewhere shows these false teachers to have been Judaisers also."¹

Of the *Epistle to the Romans*, which was also written from Smyrna, but which contains no allusion to the heresy, we shall speak later on.

While "the ten leopards" who were dragging him to Rome halted at Troas, waiting for a ship to carry them to Neapolis, Philo the deacon of Cilicia, and Agathopus, "an elect man, who has followed me from Syria, bidding farewell to his life," joined him. They had halted at Philippi *en route*, and Ignatius sends back by them his three remaining letters.

Among the Philadelphians it was the Judaic side of the heresy that chiefly troubled them, and against which he warns them. Compare the words of the Lord Jesus by St. John to the same Church, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship at thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee" (Rev. iii. 9).

He thanks the Church as a whole for their kindness to Philo and Agathopus, but prays that certain persons who "had dishonoured them may be forgiven through the grace of Jesus Christ."

¹ Lightfoot.

From the *Epistle to the Smyrnæans* it appears that the Docetic element was the stronger there.

The *Epistle to Polycarp* is the last of his letters. It bears marks of having been written in haste, which is accounted for by his own words: "Inasmuch as I have not been able to write to all the Churches, because I must suddenly sail from Troas to Neapolis, as the will of the emperor enjoins, I beg that thou, as being acquainted with the purpose of God, wilt write to the adjacent Churches," etc. (*Ad Phil.* viii.). It is a pastoral Epistle dealing with his duty to his flock, and their duty towards him. It contains only one passing allusion to the heresy: "Let not those who seem to be plausible, and yet teach strange doctrines, dismay thee. Stand firm as an anvil when it is smitten."

II. THE DUTY OF OBEDIENCE AND SUBMISSION TO THEIR PASTORS.

Nothing can be further from the truth than the idea that the object of Ignatius was the undue exaltation of the ministers of the gospel above the laity. Ignatius knew nothing of any sacerdotal class in the Church; nothing of priests who had a monopoly of the gifts of the Spirit, or who possessed a mysterious power bestowed on them as official priests by the laying on of hands.

The burden of all his letters is not the duty of obedience to pastors as an end, but as a means of keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

He knew that in unity was strength, and that the unity of the members of the body with one another was necessary for their growth in grace, but more especially at the present time to withstand the false teaching of the heretics. The duty of submission to their spiritual rulers was inculcated by him, not as an end in itself, but as a means of attaining to that unity.

Every human organised body (whether family, tribe, nation, army, or Church) must have duly appointed officers and rulers, and without submission and obedience to them it is impossible for the members of the body to have unity with one another. The Churches of Christ are no exception to this rule. A perusal of a few out of the many injunctions of Ignatius on this subject will make this clear.

“It is therefore meet for you in every way to glorify Jesus Christ who glorified you; that being perfectly joined together in one submission, submitting yourselves to your bishop and presbytery, ye may be sanctified in all things.” “It becometh you to run in harmony with the mind of the bishop; which thing also ye do. For your honourable presbytery, which is worthy of God, is attuned to the bishop, even as the strings to a lyre; therefore in your concord and harmonious love Jesus Christ is sung.” “Assemble yourselves together in common, every one of you severally man by man in grace, in one faith, and one Jesus Christ, who after the flesh was of the race of David, who is Son of Man and Son of God, to the end that ye may obey the bishop and the presbytery without distraction of mind; break-

ing one bread which is the medicine of immortality, and the antidote that we should not die but live for ever in Jesus Christ" (*Ad Eph.* ii., iii., xx.).

"Do your diligence, that ye be confirmed in the ordinances of the Lord and of the apostles . . . with your revered bishop, and with the fitly-wreathed circlet of your presbytery, and with the deacons who walk after God" (*Ad Mag.* xiii.). "Take heed to observe only one Eucharist; for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup unto union in His blood; there is one sanctuary (on the meaning of *θυσιαστήριον*, see Lightfoot, note *Ad Eph.* v.)¹ as there is one bishop, together with the presbytery and the deacons, my fellow-servants, that whatsoever ye do, ye may do it according unto God" (*Ad Phil.* iv.). "Shun divisions as the beginning of evils. Do ye all follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the apostles: and reverence the deacons as God's commandment. Let no man do ought of the things pertaining to the Church apart from the bishop. Let that be held a valid Eucharist which is under the bishop, or one to whom he shall have committed it. Wheresoever the bishop shall appear there let the people be, even as where Jesus may be there is *the Catholic Church*. It is not lawful apart from the bishop either to baptize or to hold a love feast; but whatsoever he shall approve, this is well-pleasing to God; that everything which ye do may be sure and valid" (*Ad Smyr.* viii.).

¹ Appendix C.

III. THE CHANGE IN THE NOMENCLATURE OF THE MINISTERS.

In every Christian writing of the first century, without any exception, the terms "presbyter" and "bishop" are synonymous. In the Epistles of Ignatius three distinct orders of ministry—bishop, presbyter, and deacon—appear for the first time. We have seen that in every fully-organised Jewish synagogue there were three orders of ministry: (1) alms-collectors or deacons, (2) presbyters, and (3) a president; and that the organisation of the Christian Churches was formed on the model of the synagogue. In all organised human bodies ruled by a college of officers, it is an almost universal custom for the college to appoint one of their number as chairman or president. It is rather to be wondered at that in the whole of the first century there is no trace of a *permanent* president in any Church but that of Jerusalem, and that president was St. James, the Lord's brother. It is *not* strange that at the beginning of the second century we should find that in the Churches of Asia Minor and Syria there are life presidents, and that they are designated by a special title. They had not to invent a new title for the office, but simply to restrict the title of *Episcopus* or Overseer, which in common with his fellow presbyters he already bore, to him as chief pastor, and to restrict the title of presbyter to the remaining members of the college. Henceforth the terms "bishop" and "presbyter" are no longer

synonymous in the Churches of Asia and Syria, and before the end of the second century the Churches of Europe and Africa followed their example. It is probable that the prevalence of heretical teaching in Asia and Syria, and the consequent necessity of a more perfect organisation to withstand it, led to the change being made first in them.

Ignatius writes to Polycarp: "Ignatius, who is also Theophorus, to Polycarp, *overseer* (*episcopus*) of the Church of the Smyrnæans, or rather who art thyself *overseen* by God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." The meaning of the term *Episcopus* here depends on the meaning of the term *Ecclesia*. *Ecclesia* is used by Ignatius (1) for a local Church, *i.e.* the aggregate of Christians residing in any city or locality. It occurs with this meaning thirty times in his seven Epistles. (2) For the Catholic Church, *i.e.* the aggregate of all the local Churches in the world, or "the blessed company of all faithful people." He is the first Christian writer who uses the term "*Catholic Church*," and he thus defines it: "Wheresoever Christ is, there is the Catholic Church" (*Ad Smyr.* viii.).

The Ignatian bishops were therefore pastors of single congregations of Christians, or, to quote the words of Bishop Gore, "The bishop, according to the early ideal, was by no means the great prelate. He was the pastor of a flock, like the vicar of a modern town, in intimate relations with his people."¹

And, on the limitation of this form of the

¹ Gore, *The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 104, 113.

episcopate to the Churches of Asia and Syria, Bishop Gore writes: "This difference between the East and the West continued till after the middle of the second century. About the middle of that century(?) Polycarp writes, no doubt as bishop, 'Polycarp and the presbyters that are with him to the Church at Philippi'; but he speaks of no bishop at Philippi, only of elders and deacons, and bids the Philippians 'obey the elders and deacons as God and Christ,' as if there were no higher office in question there. The elders, moreover, are exhorted in terms which imply that the exercise of discipline and the administration of alms belong to them."¹

Ignatius knew of no uniformity of ecclesiastical organisation in the whole Catholic Church; he knew of no head of the Church but the ascended Lord. The unity for which he pleads so earnestly was not a union of Churches, but of the members of each Church in submission to their pastors and teachers. Each local Church was in his eyes a temple of God, a body of Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit. He knew of no aggregate of congregations forming one Church under one human head; there was no Church of Asia Minor, of Italy, or of Greece. The bishop was not a *pastor pastorum*, but "the pastor of one flock, like the vicar of a modern town." And that not universally in all Churches; for, in his *Epistle to the Church in Rome*, he makes no allusion to a bishop there, any more than Polycarp does in his *Epistle to the Philippians*.

¹ Gore, *The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 104, 113.

Ignatius is not only an advocate of the necessity of there being a bishop in each local Church, but he is equally strong in urging the necessity of *there being a plurality of presbyters and a plurality of deacons also in each congregation*. "It is therefore necessary that . . . without the bishop ye should do nothing, but also be subject to the presbytery, as to the apostles of Jesus Christ. . . . It is fitting also that the deacons, as being the ministers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, should in every respect be pleasing to all. For they are not ministers of meat and drink, but servants of the Church of God" (*Ad Trall.* ii.).

Ignatius does indeed use very strong language as to the necessity for the three orders of ministry in each Church or congregation. "Let all men respect the deacons of Jesus Christ, even as they should respect the bishop as being a type of God the Father, and the presbyters as the council of God and as the college of the apostles. Apart from these there is not even a Church" (*Ad Trall.* iii.).

He could hardly have intended these words to be taken as of universal application, for in his *Epistle to the Romans* he makes no mention of a bishop, and yet addresses her as "the Church that is beloved and enlightened through the will of Him who willeth all things that are."

The Epistle to the Church in Rome differs from all his other letters. It contains no reference to false doctrine. His object in writing it was to entreat the Roman Christians to do nothing, through motives

of mistaken kindness, to hinder his being thrown to the wild beasts. "May I have joy of the beasts that are prepared for me in Rome, and I pray that I may find them prompt. . . . Come fire and cross and grappling with wild beasts, cuttings and manglings, wrenching of bones, hacking of limbs, crushing of my whole body; come cruel tortures of the devil to assail me. Only let it be mine to attain unto Jesus Christ" (*Ad Rom.* v.).

There is one very strange phenomenon in the letters of Ignatius, namely, that *they contain no mention of St. John the Divine*. He mentions St. Peter, St. Paul, and Timothy, and was familiar with the Epistles of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, but gives no indication that He ever read any of the writings of St. John. Of St. Paul he writes in his letter to the Ephesians: "Ye are initiated into the mysteries of the gospel with Paul, the holy, the martyred, the deservedly most happy, at whose feet may I be found when I shall attain to God, and who in all his Epistles (or in every Epistle) makes mention of you" (xii.). And of Timothy he writes to the Magnesians: "Timothy the Christ-bearer was young, but hear what his teacher writes to him, 'Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers in word and in conduct'" (iii.). There are several other mentions of St. Paul in his letters. As fully fifty years had elapsed since St. Paul wrote these words to Timothy, and not more than twenty since St. John's traditional connection with the Churches of Asia had come to

an end, this entire omission of any reference to him or to his writings is very strange. It seems impossible that Ignatius could have read the letters to the seven Churches in Asia in the Apocalypse, and have made no allusion to them when writing to three of the same Churches and to two other Churches in the same province. The omission gives no colour to the theory that St. John was the founder of the Episcopacy in the Churches of Asia, and through them in all Churches. We must look elsewhere for any true foundation for what is called the apostolic succession of bishops, and we shall look in vain through all the writings of the apostles, of "apostolic men," and of "the apostolic Fathers."

VII.

POLYCARP OF SMYRNA.

WE do not know much more of the details of the life of Polycarp than of that of Ignatius; all we do know with any degree of certainty is derived from four sources, and each of them respectively casts light on the only four events in his life of which we have any certain knowledge.

I. The first of these sources is the letters of Ignatius, from which we learn that the martyr spent some time with Polycarp in Smyrna on his way to martyrdom; and wrote four of his seven letters while staying with him, and evidently conceived a greater friendship and esteem for him than for any of the other bishops whose acquaintance he made on his journey.

The last act of Ignatius, before he set sail from Troas for Neapolis, was to write the last of his precious letters to Polycarp. He wrote it in great haste, because, he says, "I must *suddenly* sail from Troas to Neapolis, as the will of the emperor enjoins." In it he expresses the greatest affection for his younger brother, and the high opinion that he had formed of his character.

"Having obtained good proof that thy mind is fixed on God as upon an immovable rock, I loudly glorify His name that I have been thought worthy to behold thy blameless face, which may I ever enjoy in God!" (Ign. *Pol.* § 1).

Ignatius also makes special mention of Polycarp in his letters to the Magnesians and Smyrnæans (Ign. *Mag.* 15 and *Smyr.* 12).

II. The second source is the *Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians*. There can be no reasonable doubt of the authenticity of the Epistle. Irenæus, who was a disciple of Polycarp, says, "There is also an all-sufficient (*ικανωτάτη*) Epistle of Polycarp written to the Philippians, from which those who choose to do so, and are anxious about their salvation, can learn the character of his faith and the preaching of the truth" (*Adv. Hær.* iii. 3). Its authenticity is established by an abundance of external testimony as well as by internal evidence.

The Philippians had written to Polycarp asking him to send them some words of exhortation (§ 3); to forward a letter from them to the Church in Syria (§ 13); and to send them any letters from Ignatius which he might have received (*ibid.*). It is addressed by "Polycarp and the presbyters who are with him to the Church of God which sojourneth in Philippi."

He writes: "I rejoiced greatly that ye received the followers of the true love, and escorted them on their way, as befitted you—those men encircled

with the diadems of them that are truly chosen of God and our Lord" (§ 1). And later on in the Epistle he exhorts the Philippians to be imitators of the martyrs: "I exhort you therefore to be obedient to the word of righteousness, and to practise all endurance, which also ye saw with your own eyes in the blessed Ignatius and Zosimus and Rufus, yea, and in others also who came from among yourselves" (§ 9). As Zosimus and Rufus are not mentioned in the letters of Ignatius, and he makes no allusion to any fellow-prisoners, it appears that they were Christian martyrs who were sent, probably like Ignatius, by Pliny to be placed under the same escort, and proceed with him to Rome in the custody of the "ten leopards" (*Ign. Rom.* 5).

A great part of this short letter consists of quotations from the New Testament, whereas there is not a single quotation in it from the Old Testament. He is, we believe, the first of "the Fathers" who quotes either of the Epistles of St. Peter; and he makes more use of his first Epistle than of any other of the books of the New Testament.

There is a resemblance to words in St. Peter's second Epistle in the following: "For neither am I, nor is any other like me, able to follow the wisdom of the blessed and glorified Paul" (§ 3; comp. 2 Pet. iii. 15).

He expresses great grief for "Valens, who aforetime was a presbyter among you," but who had fallen through covetousness; and takes occasion to

warn them that, "If a man refrain not from covetousness, he shall be defiled by idolatry, and shall be judged as one of the Gentiles who know not the judgment of the Lord. Nay, know we not that *the saints shall judge the world*, as Paul teacheth (1 Cor. vi. 2). But I have not found any such thing in you, neither have heard thereof, among whom the blessed Paul laboured, who were his Epistles in the beginning (comp. 2 Cor. iii. 2). For he boasteth of you in all those Churches which alone at that time knew God; for we knew Him not as yet" (§ 11). This is a proof of the late date of the foundation of the Church in Smyrna, and furnishes a strong presumption in favour of the late date of the Apocalypse; for the Church in that city must have been founded a considerable time previous to the date of the Epistles to the seven Churches in Asia (Rev. ii., iii.).

He exhorts the *men* to remember that "the love of money is the root of all troubles"; that we must "arm ourselves with the armour of righteousness, and let us teach ourselves first to walk in the commandment of the Lord; and our *wives* also, to walk in the faith that hath been given them, and in love and purity, cherishing their own husbands in all truth, and loving all men equally in all chastity; and to train their children in the training of the Lord. Our *widows* must be sober-minded as touching the faith of the Lord, knowing that they are God's altar (*θυσιαστήριον θεοῦ*), and that all sacrifices are carefully inspected, and

nothing escapeth Him either of their thoughts or intents or any of the secret things of the heart" (§ 4).

"*Deacons* should be blameless in the presence of His righteousness, as deacons of God and Christ, and not of men; not calumniators, not double tongued, not lovers of money, temperate in all things, compassionate, diligent, walking according to the truth of the Lord who became a minister of all (διάκονος πάντων). Wherefore it is right that ye should abstain from these things, submitting yourselves to the presbyters and deacons as to God and Christ" (§ 5).

"And the *presbyters* also must be compassionate, merciful towards all men, turning back the sheep that are gone astray, visiting the infirm, not neglecting a widow or an orphan or a poor man; but providing always for things honourable in the sight of God and man, abstaining from all anger, respect of persons, unrighteous judgment; being far from all love of money, not quick to believe anything against any man, not hasty in judgment, knowing that we all are debtors of sin" (§ 6).

DATE OF THE EPISTLE.

The only note of time contained in the Epistle is to be found in the following words: "The letters of Ignatius which were sent to us by him, and others as many as we had by us, we send unto you, according as ye gave charge,—from which ye will

be able to gain great advantage. Moreover, concerning Ignatius himself and those that are with him (τῶν σὺν αὐτῷ: *qui cum eo sunt*), if ye have any sure tidings, certify us" (§ 13).

From these words it is evident that the letter was written before tidings of the martyrdom of Ignatius had reached Polycarp, and that the last he had heard of Ignatius, Zosimus, Rufus, and perhaps other martyrs, was their departure from Philippi. As it is agreed by all that the martyrdom could not have taken place later than A.D. 117, the *Epistle of Polycarp* must have been written not later than A.D. 120.

CONCLUSION OF THE EPISTLE.

"I write these things to you by Crescens, whom I commended to you recently and now commend unto you; for he hath walked blamelessly with us; and I believe also with you in like manner. But ye shall have his sister commended when she shall come to you. Fare ye well in the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen" (§ 14).

With these words closes all that can be known from the writings of the apostolic Fathers on Church organisation and unity. But there are two other writings of a later date which give additional information about Polycarp, and which are not without bearing on our subject.

III. The third source from which we derive the knowledge we possess of the details of the life of

Polycarp is "the Fragment," which unfortunately alone remains "of the letter written by Irenæus to Victor, Bishop of Rome" (A.D. 190-194).

There is a special interest attaching to a visit which was paid by Polycarp to Rome (A.D. 150-154). The object of his visit was to discuss various points of difference in rites and ceremonies between the Churches of the East and West, and especially the proper time of keeping Easter. The Churches of Asia, following the example of St. John, commemorated the Crucifixion on the 14th of Nisan, whatever the day of the week might be; whereas the Churches of the West always observed a Friday as the anniversary of the Crucifixion, and a Sunday as that of the Resurrection. Forty years later, Victor, the Bishop of Rome, arrogantly excommunicated the Eastern Churches for following the custom of St. John. This was the beginning of what afterwards led to the entire separation of the Eastern Church from the Western. The Council of Nice (A.D. 325) decided in favour of the Western usage, and branded the Asiatic Christians as heretics, with the title of *Quartodecimans*.

Irenæus, though he was a pupil of Polycarp and an Eastern by birth, when he became bishop of a Western Church (Lyons in France) adopted the Western usage, probably thinking it a matter of no importance. He strongly disapproved of the arrogance of Victor, and wrote him a letter of which the following is the only fragment that remains. It will speak for itself.

FRAGMENT OF LETTER FROM IRENÆUS, BISHOP OF
LYONS, TO VICTOR, BISHOP OF ROME (A.D.
190-194).

“For the controversy is not merely as regards the day, but also as regards the form itself of the fast. For some consider themselves bound to fast one day, others still more, while others do so for forty days; the diurnal and nocturnal hours they measure out together as their fasting day. And this variety among the observers of the fasts had not its origin in our time, but long before in that of our predecessors, some of whom probably, being not very accurate in their observance of it, handed down to posterity the custom as it had, through simplicity or private fancy, been (introduced) among them. And yet, nevertheless, all these lived in peace one with another, and we also keep peace together. Thus, in fact, the difference in observing the fast establishes the harmony of (our common) faith. And the presbyters preceding Soter in the government of the Church which thou dost now rule—I mean Anicetus and Pius, Hygenus and Telesphorus, and Sixtus—did neither themselves observe it (after that fashion), nor permit those with them to do so. Notwithstanding this, those who did not keep (the feast in this way) were peacefully disposed towards those who came to them from other dioceses (provinces?) in which it was so observed, although such observance was (felt) in more decided contrariety (as presented) to those who

did not fall in with it ; and none were ever cast out of the Church for this matter. On the contrary, those presbyters who preceded thee, and who did not observe this custom, sent the Eucharist to those of other dioceses who did observe it ; and when the blessed Polycarp was sojourning in Rome in the time of Anicetus, although a slight controversy had arisen among them as to certain other points, they were at once well inclined towards each other (with regard to the matter in hand), not willing that any quarrel should arise between them on this head. For neither could Anicetus persuade Polycarp to forego the observance in his own way, inasmuch as these things had been always so observed by St. John the disciple of the Lord, and by other apostles with whom he had been conversant ; nor, on the other hand, could Polycarp succeed in persuading Anicetus (to keep the observance in his way), for he maintained that he was bound to adhere to the usage of the presbyters who preceded him, and in this state of affairs they held fellowship with each other ; and Anicetus conceded to Polycarp in the Church the celebration of the Eucharist, by way of showing him respect ; so that they parted in peace one from the other, maintaining peace with the whole Church, both those who did observe this custom and those who did not."

Anicetus also manifested the esteem in which he held Polycarp by asking him to preside, instead of himself, at an ordination of presbyters (Euseb. vi. 24).

It has been a pleasant task to trace the course of the river of the water of Life from its source in "the Rock of ages" through the lives and teaching of the apostles and apostolic Fathers. With the exception of the rather muddy water of "the Didache," we have found little, if anything, of the turbid stream of human tradition mixed with it. The charming story of the mutual forbearance and love of Polycarp and Anicetus is a fitting close to our study. Truly Christlike was their spirit in the matter, and truly Christlike was the spirit in which, forty years later, Irenæus, while sternly rebuking the arrogance of Victor, relates the narrative. Alas! from the time of Victor and onwards, the student of Church history will have greater and greater difficulty in tracing the course of the pure river of Life amidst the foul waters of earth by which it became more and more polluted. Ecclesiastical pride begun in Diotrophes, and, springing up again in Victor, has been the most fruitful of all the sources of divisions, troubles, and persecutions in the Church. It was the same spirit of pride which, less than two hundred years after the date of Irenæus' letter, led the ecclesiastics "who governed the conscience of the Emperor Theodosius" to egg him on to promulgate his fifteen edicts against so-called heretics; one of which was a decree that the atrocious crime of the *Quartodecimans*, in celebrating the festival of Easter on an improper day, should be atoned for by capital punishment.¹

¹ Gibbon's *Rome*, iii. 233, Bohn's ed.

Another unexpected fact is brought to light by this "Fragment of Irenæus." Although at the date of his writing the letter (A.D. 190-194) the Episcopate must have become as distinct at least from the Presbyterate in Europe as it had become in Asia in the days of Ignatius, yet there is no trace in the letter that it had become so in the days of Anicetus at Rome (A.D. 150). In fact the words of Bishop Gore are as applicable to the letter of Irenæus to Victor as they are to the letter of Polycarp to the Philippians. Irenæus, though he writes as a bishop to the Bishop of Rome, speaks of no bishop, only of presbyters, in Rome in the days of Anicetus; as if there were no higher officer in question there; the presbyters, moreover, are spoken of in terms which imply that the exercise of discipline belonged to them.

IV. The letter of the Smyrnæans on the martyrdom of Polycarp is the fourth source from which we derive information about the martyred bishop. The letter is addressed by the Church of Smyrna to the Church of Philomelium, and is by the best authorities considered to be a genuine document. It was probably written shortly after his martyrdom, which took place A.D. 155 or 156. It contains perhaps less of the marvellous than any other of the numerous martyrologies, and may be accepted as a true account of the main facts of the last days of the saint. It is to it that we are indebted for words with which we are all so familiar; how, when Polycarp was pressed hard by the Roman magistrate

to swear by the genius of Cæsar, in the stadium of Smyrna, in presence of a crowd of his fellow-citizens, he said: "Fourscore and six years have I served Him, and He hath done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King who hath saved me?"

While we accept on the whole the account of his noble witness for Christ at the stake, we are not obliged to believe as gospel all the details of his martyrdom; how, "When he had offered up the 'amen' and finished his prayer, the firemen lighted the fire, and a mighty flame rushing forth, we, to whom it was given to see, saw a marvel, yea, and we were preserved that we might relate what happened to the rest. The fire making the appearance of a vault, like the sail of a vessel filled by the wind, made a wall round about the body of the martyr; and it was there in the midst, not like flesh burning, but like (a loaf in the oven, or like) gold and silver refined in a furnace. For we perceived such a fragrant smell, as if it were the wafted odour of frankincense or of some other spice. So at length the lawless men, seeing that his body could not be consumed by fire, ordered the executioner to go up to him and stab him with a dagger. And when he had done this, there came forth a dove and a quantity of his blood, so that it extinguished the fire; and all the multitude marvelled that there should be so great a difference between the unbelievers and the elect. In the number of these was this man, the glorious martyr Polycarp, who was found an apostolic and prophetic teacher in our own time, a bishop

of the holy Church which is in Smyrna. For every word which he uttered from his mouth was accomplished and will be accomplished" (§§ 15, 16).

Such is the only genuine account we possess of the glorious death of the last of the apostolic Fathers.

The only Life of Polycarp is that which is ascribed to one Pionius; it belongs to the close of the fourth century, and "is so entirely unauthentic that we cannot attribute the least certainty even to those of its statements which are not demonstrably false."¹

¹ Farrar.

VIII.

SOME DEDUCTIONS FROM THE FOREGOING.

THE keynote of the writings of the apostolic Fathers is the same as that of the apostles, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." According to them, the *esse* of the body of Christ depended not upon one outward organisation, but upon "the power of an endless life" bestowed on every member by the indwelling Spirit. The object of all their writings was not the exaltation of the minister, but the unity of the members; not the priesthood of a class, but the priesthood of all the members, as members of the One Ever-living High Priest.

Ignatius, more than others, gives prominence to the necessity of certain orders of ministry to the health of the body, rightly considering that in every material organisation there must be an outward and visible order, as well as an inward spirit of unity and life; and that no society could for any time preserve the unity of its members, without appointing properly constituted officers to rule it. It is not true to speak of Ignatius as an advocate of Episcopacy only, without pointing out that he was

just as much an advocate of the necessity of there being a plurality of deacons, and a council of presbyters in each congregation, as of there being an *episcopus* over it; and that the term *episcopus* in his language means the pastor of a congregation, not the bishop of a diocese. "Let all men respect the deacons of Jesus Christ, even as they respect the bishop as being a type of God the Father, and the presbyters as the council of God, and as the college of the apostles. Apart from these there is no Church" (*Trall.* iii.). Of monarchical Episcopacy (moniscopacy) there is no trace in the period of Church history under discussion. The organisation of the Church was on republican, not on monarchical lines; each congregation being ruled by an *episcopus* (overseer or rector), "in council with your honourable presbytery, which is worthy of God, and is attuned to the *episcopus* as the strings to a lyre"; and the laity being represented by the deacons, "who are most dear to me, and who are intrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ": the special office of the deacons being to attend to the wants of the poor.

Unfortunately the trend of the Reformed Churches was, till lately, too much towards division; thank God it is now turning in the opposite direction, and we are beginning to realise that unity is strength. At the Reformation there was a natural reaction from the tyranny of a corrupt priesthood, under which the laity had groaned for ages. The great principle of the Reformation being the right of

private judgment, and the privilege of every one to read the word of God, and to draw near to his Father in heaven, without the intervention of any human priest, men naturally fell into a mistaken idea of "the liberty that is in Christ"; forgetting that the Holy Spirit had appointed rulers in His Church, and that it is the duty of all Christians to submit to one another, and specially to their spiritual leaders and rulers; and that without this mutual submission it is impossible to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Let us not forget that the three orders of ministry in Asia in the beginning of the second century were not a bishop over a diocese and a single presbyter with no deacon in each congregation; but an *episcopus*, a council of presbyters, and a number of deacons in each congregation. Many non-Episcopal Churches retain, we believe, these three orders, while Episcopal Churches have given them up. Is it not our neglect, as Episcopalians, of these apostolic orders of ministry that paralyses our work, and deprives us of the co-operation of the laity? Does it not make the following words of the Bishop of Worcester, in his presidential address on 30th September 1902, equally applicable to every incumbent in his diocese?—"Too much is left to the solitary judgment of the individual. On matters small and great I am constantly being told, in a phrase which I can never hear without its sending a

shiver through me, 'It must be as your Lordship pleases.'"¹

Thank God the definition of the "Church Catholic" and of "the Churches" in the writings of our Reformers and in our Prayer-Book and Articles is quite in agreement with that of the Apostolic Fathers.

"The Church of God is the congregation of the faithful, wherein the Word of God is truly preached, and the sacraments justly administered, according to the institution of Christ, and His doctrine taught unto us by His Holy Word; and the Church of God is not by God's Word taken for the multitude of bishops, priests, and such others; but it is the company of all men hearing God's Word and obeying the same, lest any man should be seduced, believing himself to be bound to any ordinary succession of bishops and priests, but only to the Word of God and the right use of the Sacraments."²

The Church is "the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people."³

There is one other theory of "the Churches" and "the Church" at which it is well, in conclusion, to take a glance, namely, that based upon the so-called apostolic succession of the Diocesan Episcopate.

¹ Report of Worcester Church Conference, *Record*, 3rd October 1902.

² "John Hooper, Bishop and Martyr, A.D. 1551," *Light from Old Times*, Bishop Ryle, p. 107.

³ Office of Holy Communion, Book of Common Prayer. See also Article XIX. of the XXXIX. Articles of Religion.

IX.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

(Audi Alteram Partem !)

EPISCOPACY, with its claim to an apostolic succession, is necessary, not to the *bene esse* only, but to the *esse* of a Church.

The above is the thesis of a remarkable book, *The Church and the Christian Ministry*, by Canon (now Bishop) Gore.

Statement of the Thesis.

“ The Episcopate, with its claim of an apostolic succession, claiming to be a priesthood, does not represent a temporary accommodation of the Christian ideal, more or less necessitated by circumstances, to the Jewish or Pagan ideas among which the Church spread, but it is simply the fulfilment of Christ’s intention, an essential and inviolable element of Christianity to the end— (it is) the catholic conception of the Bishop, as securing the channels of grace and truth and representing the Divine presence.” ¹

¹ *The Church and the Christian Ministry*, p. 61.

“ Christ instituted in His Church, by succession from the apostles, a permanent ministry of truth and grace, of ‘ the Word and Sacraments,’ as an indispensable part of her organisation and continuous corporate life. There belongs to the order of bishops, and to them alone, the power to perpetuate the ministry in its several grades by the transmission of the authority received from the apostles, its original depositaries; so that, as a consequence, no ministry except such as has been received by episcopal ordination can be legitimately or validly exercised in the Church.

“ The transmission of ministerial authority, or ordination, is an outward act of a sacramental character, in which the laying on of hands with prayer is a visible sign. The Church, without change of principle, came to acknowledge the effect of ordination as indelible, and to recognise as a priesthood the ministry of bishops and presbyters which it conferred.” ¹

Consequence of Thesis.

“ It will appear at once, as a consequence of all this, that the various Presbyterian and Congregational organisations, however venerable on many different grounds, have, in dispensing with the episcopal succession, violated a fundamental law of the Church’s life,—not that God’s grace has not worked, and worked largely, through many an

¹ *The Church and the Christian Ministry*, p. 115.

irregular ministry not episcopally ordained, where it was exercised in good faith, but that a ministry not episcopally received is invalid, that is to say, falls outside the conditions of covenanted security, and cannot justify its existence in terms of the covenant.”¹

A tremendous statement! A sentence of excommunication—of exclusion from the covenant of grace and life, and from the Church which is the body of Christ, of a hundred million Christians! This consequence of our author’s thesis is of a more serious nature when we remember that the learned Canon, on the most solemn occasion in his life, declared his belief that “as the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred; so the Church of Rome hath erred not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith” (Art. XIX.). It is indeed a case of “the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are we.”

We should expect the propounder of such a thesis to establish it by the most authentic facts from the history of the apostles and of the apostolic Fathers, and by the most genuine quotations from their writings. We have read and re-read *The Church and the Christian Ministry*, and found no such proof in it. The author does not relate a single fact from the history of the apostles or apostolic Fathers to prove that, (1) any one of the twelve apostles ever consecrated a bishop over any Church that he had founded; nor (2) does he quote a single passage from their

¹ *The Church and the Christian Ministry*, p. 345.

writings to prove that they regarded the ministry of bishops and presbyters as an official priesthood.

To dismiss the latter subject first, namely, that of

Sacerdotalism,

we quote his own words: "It will be observed that whereas the conception of the Christian ministry and pastorate of souls dates back behind our present period (the close of the second century) into the immemorial past (*sic*), it is only at the beginning of our period that the title of the priesthood began to be applied to it. Irenæus and Clement do not speak of the Christian ministers as priests, while Tertullian and Origen do, so that it is only towards the end of the second century that sacerdotal terms begin to be applied to the clergy" (p. 196). Sacerdotalism, then, is not apostolic.

Viri Apostolici.

Our author acknowledges that there is a missing link (rather many links) between the bishops of the close of the second century and the apostles; that contemporary history leaves their pedigree incomplete. In order to bridge over the chasm, he adduces the cases of "the apostolic men" (*viri Apostolici*), St. James the Lord's brother, Timothy, Titus, and Apollos.

(1) St. James the Lord's brother. "James is clothed with apostolic authority, and when the

apostles go forth to exercise their universal commission, remains to represent the apostolic office in the Church of Jerusalem. *Probably* he was not appointed by the apostles. *Probably* his authority would have been understood to have been given him when Christ appeared to him after the resurrection." James, then, is not a case of a bishop appointed by an apostle, but *probably* one of an apostle appointed by Christ; so he may be ruled out of court.

(2) Timothy and Titus. "As to the extension of the apostolic office. As apostolic legates Timothy and Titus exercise what is essentially the later episcopal office; but it would not appear that their authority, though essentially permanent, is definitely localised like that of the diocesan bishop. St. Paul certainly contemplates his (Timothy's) continuing his ministry after his own death, and presumably in the same Church of Ephesus, in which it would appear that he had been solemnly ordained to his office (2 Tim. iv. 1-8). Nor *perhaps* can we argue against his localisation from the fact of St. Paul summoning him to Rome, or from the fact of his having gone there.

"But there is a close analogy between the office of Timothy and that of Titus, and Titus certainly appears to have left Crete to join St. Paul at Rome (?), and to have left again not for Crete but for Dalmatia (2 Tim. iv. 9; Heb. xiii. 23; Tit. iii. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 10). It should be added that no definite title is assigned to Timothy and Titus,—no doubt the necessity for fixed titles grew greater

with the lapse of time and the increase of controversy" (p. 249).

(3) Apollos. "Such ordination, again, *we should suppose* Apollos to have received. It will, however, be of course acknowledged that miraculous evidence of the Divine will, such as the Church could recognise, went far to reduce the ceremony of ordination to a lower level of importance than it held in ordinary cases" (*ibid.*).

(4) One other name of a *possible* local bishop in the days of the last of the apostles (St. John), the Canon strangely cites. "We shall probably be inclined to see in Diotrephes, with his ambitious self-exaltation and his power to cast out of the Church brethren who had come from St. John, one of these local bishops who was misusing his authority" (p. 255).

We have seen above (p. 66) that, by our author's candid acknowledgment, the Epistle of Clement proves that there was no office in the Church of Corinth in A.D. 95 higher than that of presbyter, and (p. 103) that the *Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians* proves the same to have been the case in Philippi "up to the middle of the second century."

Of the case of Clement and the Church of Rome we also read: "Though Clement cannot have been called a bishop in the later sense of the word, his position in the earliest tradition is so prominent that he must in fact have been what would have been in later times designated by that name One

of this order must, *we should suppose*, always have existed in so prominent a Church as Rome. If not in name, *we can well believe* there was in fact an episcopal succession from the first.”¹

We have seen that he acknowledges that “the Ignatian bishops” were not diocesan bishops, but that their office was that of the vicar of a parish or minister of a congregation.

His candid acknowledgment of the difficulty of proving his thesis extends beyond the period of the apostolic Fathers to that of Irenæus (A.D. 200), for he writes: “Irenæus’ use of language, indeed, about the bishop is not quite determinate; the venerable title of ‘presbyter’ is still used in an inclusive sense for the Church rulers” (ii. 3. 2, iii. 2. 3, iv. 26. 2, 4, 5, etc.).

One uniform visible Church.

“In the history of Christendom we discern a great number of organised religious bodies, owing their existence and their purpose to Christian belief and Christian ideas; but in the midst of these also we discern something incomparably more permanent and more universal—one continuous body—the Catholic Church. There it is; no one can overlook its visible existence, let us say from the time when Christianity emerges out of the gloom of the sub-apostolic age down to the period of the Reformation. And all down this period of its continuous life this

¹ The italics are our own.

Society makes a constant and unmistakable claim. It claims to have been instituted as the home of the New Covenant of salvation by the incarnate Son of God. Is the claim which this Catholic Church has made a just one?"

"Certainly the idea of a visible Church and its unity (uniformity?) was prominent there (in Rome) when Victor (A.D. 190), the bishop, attempted to excommunicate the Churches of Asia for keeping Easter after their own Johannine tradition."¹

Let us place these statements in juxtaposition with a few facts of history! There was in *Western* Christendom for many centuries down to the Reformation, one continuous body which called herself the Catholic Church. There was in Eastern Christendom a similar body in deadly feud with her Western sister, who made the same claim for herself; and there were several other Eastern Churches side by side with her. Many other Christian bodies arose in Western Christendom, but the great Western Church destroyed them with great cruelty. This Western Church claims to be the home of the New Covenant of salvation, and denies the blessings of salvation to all outside her pale. Is this claim which the Church of Rome has made a just one? Bishop Gore, if we rightly understand him, says that it is a just one. The Church of England, all the great Reformed Churches of Western Christendom, and all the Oriental Churches indignantly deny it.

¹ Gore, *The Church and the Christian Ministry*.

The Canon summons strange witnesses to support his thesis. In the first century, according to him, Diotrephes was *possibly* the solitary instance of a monarchical Episcopus; in the second century, Victor is (in opposition to Polycarp, Anicetus, and Irenæus) the sole upholder of the uniformity of one visible Church.

Evolution.

The history of the first two centuries having thus failed to produce any proofs of the thesis, the Canon proceeds to show the abundant proofs which doubtless exist in the writings of "the Fathers" of later centuries, that the Church *came to acknowledge more and more* the necessity of the three orders of bishop, priest, and deacon, and the claims made by bishops of succession from the apostles, and of the sacerdotal character of the offices of bishop and presbyter; and from these phenomena in later Church history he argues, on the principle of evolution, that they must have been in accordance with the mind and intention of Christ. "Mr. Darwin," he says, "uses these words: 'I fully admit that there are many difficulties not satisfactorily explained by my theory of descent with modification, but I cannot possibly believe that a false theory would explain so many classes of facts as I certainly think it does explain. On these grounds I drop my anchor, and believe that the difficulties will slowly disappear.' It is interesting to note what grounds

of evidence a great scientific writer thinks adequate to support a far-reaching doctrine; and it is impossible not to perceive what infinitely higher grounds we have for our theory of apostolic succession. We then have better cause to drop our anchor" (p. 243).

On the same theory of evolution as that on which Bishop Gore bases his doctrine of apostolic succession, the Church of Rome has built the doctrines of the Papacy, Mariolatry, the worship of Images, Indulgences, and all the other false doctrines for rejecting which our Reformers died at the stake; and having once built her house on the shifting sands of Tradition and Evolution, she easily found historians who filled up the missing link by the fable of St. Peter's episcopate of twenty-two years over the Church of Rome, by the Forged Decretals, and a thousand other similar inventions.

X.

CONCLUSION.

FINALLY, let us return to the point from which we started, namely, the duty of cultivating the unity of the Spirit with all who love the Lord, in view of the cry of the heathen world, at home and abroad, which is going up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and—*first as to the heathen world abroad.*

It is a mistake to think that differences of organisation between various Churches in the mission field are as great a stumbling-block to the heathen as many think. Neither idolaters nor Mohammedans expect to find Christians all of one school of thought, any more than they themselves are. The following conversation once took place between a missionary and a Moslem priest:—

Priest. “How many sects have you in England?”

Missionary. “I never counted them; but I presume we have as many as Mohammed said we should have.”

P. “What did Mohammed, peace be upon him, say?”

M. “Art thou a teacher in Islam, and knowest not what thy prophet said?”

P. "Well, what did he say?"

M. "It is written in your tradition that the prophet said: 'There were seventy sects in the religion of Moses, only one of whom went to heaven; there were seventy-one sects among the Christians, ditto; and there will be seventy-two sects among my followers, only one of whom will be saved.'"

The priest acknowledged that the prophet had spoken these words, and asked no more questions. As long as all evangelical Churches and missionary societies do not trespass on the spheres of labour of one another, and as long as they live in brotherly love, intercommunion, and fellowship one with another, differences in minor points of organisation, etc., are no stumbling-block to the heathen. There are a few missionary societies, we grieve to say, who perpetuate our home differences and divisions among the heathen, and who will not practise intercommunion and fellowship with members of other Christian bodies; *these are a sad stumbling-block to idolaters, Mohammedans, and native Christians.*

It is in the homeland that our divisions do the greatest harm. We have millions at home who live without God and without hope. We have millions at home existing in the slums of our cities, in a state of squalor and degradation which fosters the thirst for drink and every crime. Christians seem to have forgotten that the two laws of our being are, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart"; and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour

as thyself." They have forgotten that they will be judged by those two laws, and that "the King upon the throne" will say to them: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these My brethren, ye did it not to Me."

Our Lord's last and greatest commission to His Church was, "Make disciples of all nations"; but He added emphatically, "*beginning at Jerusalem.*" He charged them to "tarry at Jerusalem till they should be endued with power from on high." The promise of the Father was fulfilled; the Holy Spirit came upon them with power on the Day of Pentecost; and, "The love of God was shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Spirit which was given them." It was not with a zeal for the conversion of the far off heathen that He endued them, but with love to one another, and with love to the poor. Out of that love to the poor sprang, ere long, the office of deacons in the Church. And St. Ignatius asserts that in his opinion without a body of deacons, as well as a council of presbyters, and a pastor in each congregation, there cannot be a Church. There is a new doctrine taught amongst us, that it is by the *opus operatum* of sacraments, by observance of outer rites and ceremonies, and not by "the love of God shed abroad in our hearts," that we are to be known as the followers of Jesus of Nazareth. Our missionary societies cry in vain to wealthy England for men, women, and money for the extension of the kingdom of Christ in heathen lands. Let us heal our home divisions, let us help our

Lord and Master "to lift the poor out of the dung-hill" (1 Sam. ii. 8); let us practise love on the poor at home, and thus learn true love to those afar off; and the silver and the gold, which belong unto God, will flow in abundance into His treasury, and "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power"; and "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea."

APPENDIX.

A.—LEGEND OF THE MARTYRDOM OF CLEMENT OF ROME—(P. 49).

Legend of the Martyrdom.

IN the reign of Trajan, Clement was accused of being a Christian, and condemned by the emperor to be put to death; but he was so honoured and beloved by the people of Rome for his holiness and benevolence, that Mauritius the Prefect prevailed on Trajan to commute the sentence to banishment to the Tauric Chersonese. Mauritius wept as he read the sentence of banishment, and said, "God will not abandon thee." When Clement reached the Crimea he found two thousand Christians there working in the mines, who had been banished before him. On the occasion of a great drought, when the exiles were in danger of dying of thirst, Clement prayed for them; and as he prayed he saw in a vision a lamb pointing to a spring of water in a certain place. Clement knew that it was the Lamb of God who had answered his prayer; but on going with the Christians to the place they found no water there. However, no sooner had he struck the ground with his spade than an abundant fountain of water burst forth and satisfied the thirst of all the Christians.

The miracle became also a fountain of life to a

multitude of idolaters, who, seeing it, believed, and were baptized in its waters. On hearing of this, Trajan was enraged, and sent soldiers to slay the converts; and they all joyfully drank the cup of martyrdom. As for Clement, for fear that the Christians should pay homage to his remains, they took him out some distance from the shore, and having hung an anchor round his neck, cast him into the sea; but in answer to the prayers of the Church, the sea retired three miles, and the body of the saint was found enshrined in a white marble tomb which the angels had built over it in the depth of the sea, and the anchor lying beside the shrine. Every year, at the festival of his martyrdom, the sea retired for seven days, that the Christians might worship at his tomb. Hence a living fountain and an anchor are the symbols of St. Clement in sacred art. There are forty-seven churches in England dedicated to him, and the device in that in the Strand is an anchor on the buttons of the beadles and on the weather-cock.

B.—CHIEF PRIESTS—(P. 81).

For they are your chief priests. Though the same word is used in the Greek of the New Testament for “chief priest” and “high priest,” yet a distinction is correctly made both in the A.V. and R.V. between the singular and the plural of the word. We always find the Greek word translated “high priest” in the singular, and “chief priest” in the plural. There could have

been only one true "high priest" at any given time among the Jews, but there were many whom they called "chief priests." The word "high priest" occurs forty-one times in the Gospels and the Acts; "chief priests" occurs sixty-five times. Christ is, according to the Scripture and the writings of the early Fathers (*e.g.* Clem. of Rome, § 36; Ignat. *Phil.* § 9), the One High Priest, and the word has no plural in the Christian's language.

According to the author of the Didaché all believers are "priests," and the "prophets," not the presbyters or "bishops," are "your chief priests."

There is a wide gulf indeed between this usage of the apostles and of the apostolic Fathers and that of the Church of Rome, according to which the Bishop of Rome is the "high priest"; other bishops, "chief priests," and the "presbyters" the "priests of the New Covenant."

C.—Θυσιαστήριον—(P. 100).

Ἐὰν μή τις ᾗ ἐντὸς τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, ὑστερεῖται τοῦ ἄρτου [τοῦ Θεοῦ], εἰ γὰρ ἐνὸς καὶ δευτέρου προσευχῇ τοσαύτην ἰσχὺν ἔχει, πόσῳ μᾶλλον ἢ τε τοῦ ἐπισκόπου καὶ πάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας. "For if any one be not within the precinct of the sanctuary, he lacketh the bread (of God). For if the prayer of one and another hath so great force, how much more that of the bishop and the whole Church" (Ign. *Aph.* v.).

"τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου] The same expression oc-

curs again *Trall.* vii., ὁ ἐντὸς θυσιαστηρίου ὧν καθαρὸς ἐστίν, κ.τ.λ. The θυσιαστήριον here is not the altar, but the enclosure in which the altar stands, as the preposition ἐντὸς requires. This meaning is consistent with the sense of the word, which (unlike βῶμος) signifies the place of sacrifice"; and it is supported also by examples of its use as applied to Christian Churches; *e.g.* *Conc. Laod.*, Can. 19, μόνοις ἐξὸν εἶναι τοῖς ἱερατικοῖς εἰσιέναι εἰς τὸ θυσιαστήριον (*i.e.* the *sacrarium*), compared with Can. 4, οὐ δεῖ γυναῖκας ἐν τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ εἰσέρχεσθαι (*Tabb. Conc.* i. pp. 1533, 1537, ed. Colet).

"This seems also to be its sense in *Rev.* x. 1, μέτρησον τὸν ναὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον καὶ τοὺς προσκυνοῦντας ἐν αὐτῷ; comp. xiv. 17, 18, ἄλλος ἄγγελος ἐξήλθεν ἐν τοῦ ναοῦ . . . καὶ ἄλλος ἄγγελος (ἐξήλθεν) ἐκ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου. (For the ναός, as confined to the holy place and distinguished from the court of the altar, see *Clem. Rom.* 41.)

"Thus θυσιαστήριον, being at once the place of sacrifice and the court of the congregation, was used metaphorically for the Church of Christ, the θυσιαστήριον ἔμφυχον, as St. Chrysostom terms it. Somewhat similarly in *Polyc. Phil.* 4, γνωσκούσας ὅτι εἰσὶν θυσιαστήριον Θεοῦ, it is applied to a section of the Church, the body of 'widows.' . . . In fact the imagery here is explained by the following words, where ὁ ἐπίσκοπος καὶ πᾶσα ἡ ἐκκλησία corresponds to θυσιαστήριον, while ἡ προσευχή is the spiritual sacrifice therein offered.

"For the prayers of the Christians, as taking the place which the sacrifices held under the old dispensation, see the note on Clem. Rom. 44" (Lightfoot, *Ign. Aph.* v.).

"*τοῦ ἄρτου τοῦ Θεοῦ*] *i.e.* 'the spiritual sustenance which God provides for His people.' There is probably a reference to the eucharistic bread here, as there is in *Rom.* 7 (see note there). The eucharistic bread, however, is not exclusively or directly contemplated, but only taken as a type of the spiritual nourishment which is dispensed through Christ. This reference (like *Rom.* 7) seems to be inspired by John vi. 31 sq., where also the eucharistic bread furnishes the imagery, while, at the same time, a larger application is contemplated, *ὁ ἄρτος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστὶν ὁ καταβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, κ.τ.λ.*" (*ibid.*).

Note how entirely scriptural is the conception of the Church, the body of Christ, in the writings of the apostolic Fathers! According to them, all believers, men and women alike, dwell in, or rather *are*, the *θυσιαστήριον*, "the temple of the living God" (2 Cor. vi. 16). How great was the falling off in the next two centuries! According to the canons of the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 363), the *θυσιαστήριον* is the *sacrarium* of the material church, and all laymen and women are excluded from it.

D.—(P. 117).

Though it was our intention, in seeking to ascertain what was truly apostolic in the orders of the

Christian ministry, not to go beyond the Apostolic Fathers, and the date A.D. 130, yet the mention of Polycarp in the letter of Irenæus to Victor (A.D. 190–195) introduced that great Christian writer to the reader. As the fact that Irenæus, in that letter, speaks of no order of ministry higher than the presbyterate as having existed in Rome in A.D. 150, may have given a false idea of his teaching on this subject, it is necessary to correct this idea.

Irenæus is, in fact, the earliest Christian writer who “asserts that the apostles established ‘bishops’ in all the Churches which they founded; endowed them with authority to teach what was to be handed down in unbroken succession, and bestowed on them pre-eminently the gift of discerning and knowing the truth” (Farrar, *Lives of the Fathers*, vol. i. p. 77).

Dean Farrar adds: “We will not go so far as to call this ‘an historic fiction’; but, if it be true, it is strange that, on the one hand, all the data which we possess should point to a different conclusion, and that, on the other hand, we should hear nothing definite about this fact until it was required to strengthen the hands of the combatants against Gnosticism in the last third of the second century. But it is impossible to read Irenæus without seeing that he endows the physical Church with an infallibility in all things which was never promised by Christ, and loads it with attributes and eulogies which are scarcely derived from the language of Scripture” (*ibid.*).

Irenæus quotes almost every book of the New Testament, and many of the Old, in his refutation

of the Gnostics ; and it is ever to be regretted that he did not see that the word of God was more than sufficient for his purpose, and that his appeal to uncertain tradition not only weakened his argument, but sowed the seed of a system of error which has done greater and more permanent injury to the Church than the heresy which he so ably refuted. "Since, however," he says, "it would be very tedious—to reckon up the successions of all (the bishops) in all the Churches, we do put to confusion all those who, in whatever manner, whether by an evil self-pleasing, by vainglory, or by blindness and perverse opinion, assemble in unauthorised meetings ; (we do this, I say,) by indicating that tradition, derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and organised at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul ; as also by (pointing out) the faith preached to men, which comes down to our time by means of the successions of the bishops. For it is a matter of necessity that every Church should agree with this Church on account of its pre-eminent authority, that is, the faithful everywhere, inasmuch as the apostolic tradition has been preserved continuously by those (faithful men) who exist everywhere.

"The blessed apostles, then, having founded and built up the Church, committed into the hands of Linus the office of the episcopate. To him succeeded Anacletus ; and after him, in the third place from the apostles, Clement was allotted the bishopric. To this Clement succeeded Evaristus.

Alexander followed Evaristus ; then, sixth from the apostles, Sixtus was appointed ; after him Telesphorus, who was gloriously martyred ; then Hyginus ; after him, Pius ; then after him, Anicetus. Soter having succeeded Anicetus, Eleutherius does now, in the twelfth place from the apostles, hold the inheritance of the episcopate. In this order, and by this succession, the ecclesiastical tradition from the apostles, and the preaching of the truth, have come down to us. And this is most abundant proof that there is one and the same vivifying faith, which has been preserved in the Church from the apostles until now, and handed down in truth" (Iren. *Adv. Hær.* iii. 3).

Great an authority as is Irenæus on Christian doctrine, he is notoriously unreliable as an historian. Thus he tells us that Jesus Christ lived for fifty years (*Adv. Hær.* ii. 6). Few, if any, Church historians now accept his statement as to the successions of the bishops of Rome as gospel truth. "Dr. Burton has correctly observed *that no point of ecclesiastical history is involved in so much perplexity and contradiction as the succession of the early bishops of Rome*" (Harvey's *Iren.* vol. ii. p. 10).

We have in the above the first nest-egg, from which sprang the twin doctrines of "Apostolic Succession" and "the supremacy of the Church of Rome," laid by the good Irenæus about A.D. 180. These two dogmas stand or fall on the same foundation. The best of men have erred and been inconsistent. Irenæus' inconsistency, with regard to the second of these doctrines, is manifested by his letter

to the Bishop of Rome, written ten years later, in which he sharply reproves Victor for his attempt to excommunicate the Eastern Churches for not conforming to the tradition of the Church of Rome as to the date of the observance of Easter. The whole history of the Church in after ages proves that bishops, as such, have not inherited from the apostles the gift of infallibility in "discerning and knowing the truth" in all things.

The only other Christian writer of the second century who casts any light on the subject is Justin Martyr; and of him Dean Farrar writes: "Of 'the Church' Justin says scarcely anything. Unlike Ignatius and Irenæus he has nothing to remark about bishops, knowing no church officer except a *president* (ὁ προεστὼς) and deacons, and recognising the universal priesthood of all Christians under the one great High Priest, Christ" (*Lives of the Fathers*, p. 114).

May we not discern, in this account of the churches with which Justin Martyr was cognizant, a mark of the downgrade process which took place in all religions, Christianity not excepted? Of the three Ignatian orders of the ministry in each congregation, or church, only two remain. "The fitly-wreathed circlet of your presbytery" (p. 100) has ceased to exist, and the *president* of the college of presbyters has become the *president* of the church; the college of deacons will soon follow the fate of the college of presbyters.

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